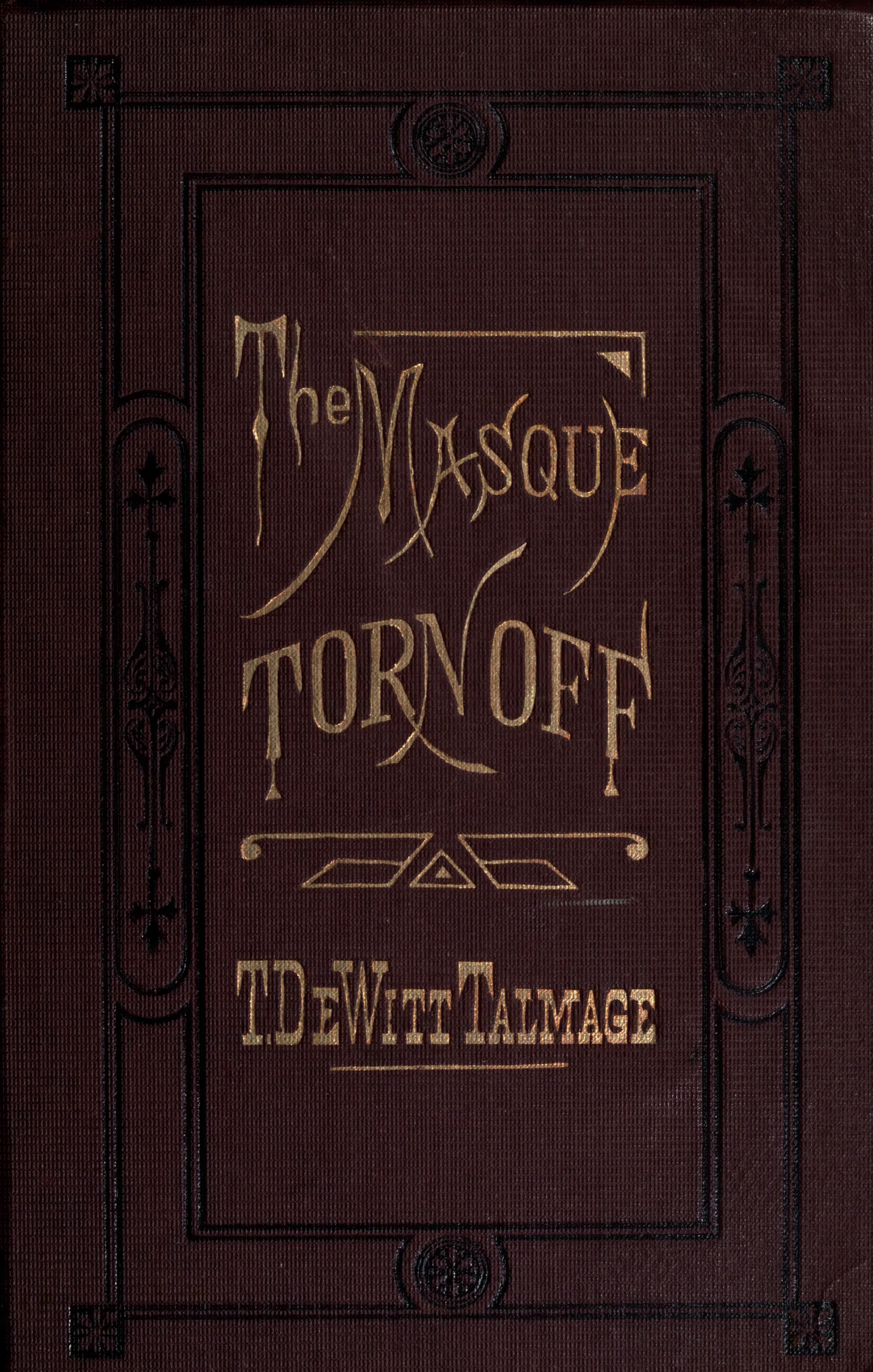

The Masque Torn Off

T. DeWitt Talmage

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THE

MASQUE TORN OFF.

BY

T. DEWITT TALMAGE, D. D.,

AUTHOR "CRUMBS SWEPT UP," "AROUND THE TEA TABLE," "SPORTS THAT KILL,
ETC., ETC.

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

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T. DEWITT TALMAGE.

090

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

In issuing the "MASQUE TORN OFF" from our press we do it in the profound conviction that the Christian community and the great American Public in general will appreciate these soul-stirring discourses on the temptations and vices of city life, by Dr. Talmage as seen by him in his midnight explorations in the haunts of vice of New York City, with his exposure of the traps and pitfalls that tempt our youth from the path of rectitude. They are written in his strongest descriptive powers, sparkling with graceful images and illustrative anecdotes; terrible in their earnestness; uncompromising in denunciation of sin and wickedness among the high or low, sparing neither rich nor poor; and are Dr. Talmage's best efforts in his earnest, aggressive warfare against the foes of society, every page burning with eloquent entreaty for a better, purer life, and are of intense, soul-absorbing interest to all who look for the advancement and higher development of the human race. This work is the ONLY REVISED AND AUTHORIZED publication of Dr. Talmage's sermons.

THE PUBLISHERS.

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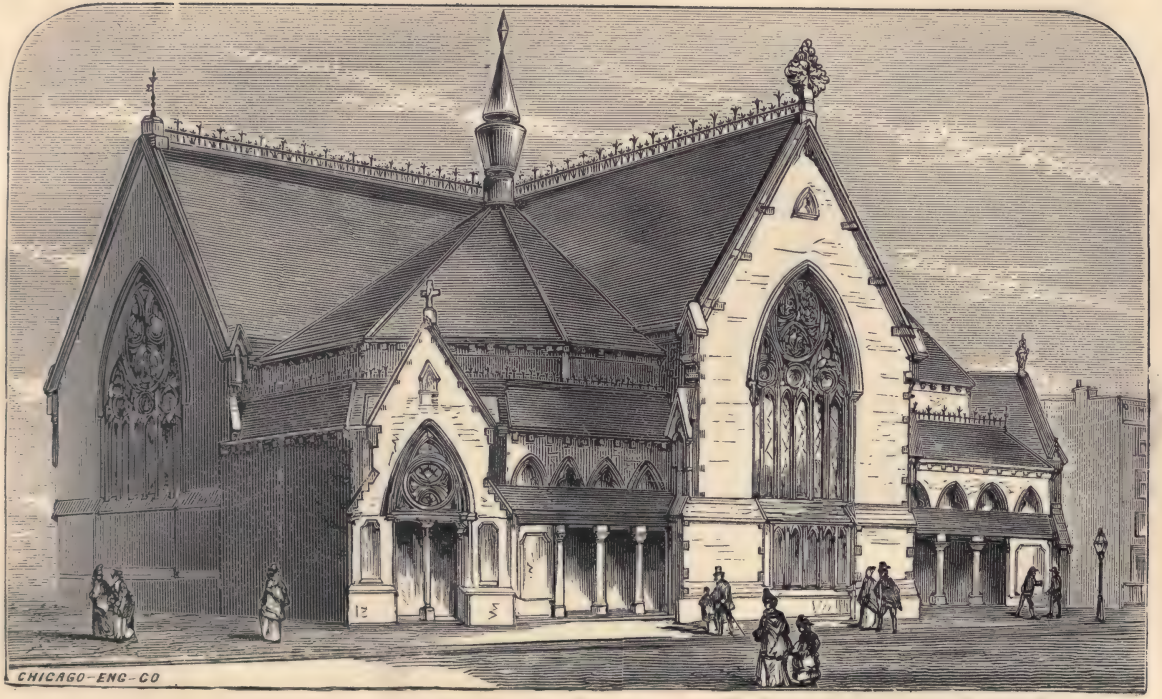

THE BROOKLYN TABERNACLE.

T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D. D.

Thomas DeWitt Talmage was born in 1832, in Bound Brook, Somerset County, N. J. His father was a farmer of much vigor and consistency of character; his mother a woman of noted energy, hopefulness and equanimity. Both parents were in marked respects characteristic. Differences of disposition and methods blended in them into a harmonious, consecrated, benignant and cheery life. The father won all the confidence and the best of the honors a hard-sensed truly American community had to yield. The mother was that counseling and quietly provident force which made her a helpmeet indeed and her home the center and sanctuary of the sweetest influences that have fallen on the path of a large number of children, of whom four sons are all ministers of the Word. From a period ante-dating the Revolution, the ancestors of our subject were members of the Reformed Dutch Church, in which Dr Talmage's father was the leading lay office bearer through a life extended beyond fourscore years. The youngest of the children, it seemed doubtful at first whether DeWitt would follow his brothers into the ministry. His earliest preference was the law, the studies of which he pursued for a year after his graduation with honors from the University of the City of New York. The faculties which would have made him the greatest jury advocate of the age were, however, preserved for and directed toward the pulpit by an unrest which took the very sound of a cry within him for months, "Woe is me if I preach not the gospel." When he submitted to it the always ardent but never urged hopes of his honored parents were realized. He entered the ministry from the New Brunswick Seminary of Theology. As his destiny and powers came to manifestation in Brooklyn, his pastoral life prior to that was but a preparation for it. It can, therefore, be indicated as an incidental stage in his career rather than treated at length as a principal part of it. His first settlement was at Belleville, on the beautiful Passaic, in New Jersey. For three years there he underwent an excellent practical education in the conventional ministry. His congregation was about the most cultivated and exacting in the rural regions of the sterling little state. Historically, it was known to be about the oldest society of Protestantism in New Jersey. Its records, as preserved, run back over 200 years, but it is known to have had a strong life the better part of a century more. Its structure is regarded as one of the finest of any country congregation in the United States. No wonder: it stands within rifle-shot of the quarry from which Old Trinity in New York was hewn. The value (and the limits) of stereotyped preaching and what he did *not* know came as an instructive and disillusionizing force to the theological tyro at Belleville. There also came and remained strong friendships, inspiring revivals, and sacred counsels.

By natural promotion three years at Syracuse succeeded three at Belleville. That cultivated, critical city furnished Mr. Talmage the value of an audience in which professional men were predominant in influence. His preaching there grew tonic and free. As Mr. Pitt advised a young friend, he "risked himself." The church grew from few to many—from a state of coma to athletic life. The preacher learned to go to school to humanity and his own heart. The lessons they taught him agreed with what was boldest and most compelling in the spirit of the revealed Word. Those whose claims were sacred to him found the saline climate of Syracuse a cause of unhealth. Otherwise it is likely that that most delightful region in the United States—Central New York—for men of letters who equally love nature and culture, would have been the home of Mr. Talmage for life.

The next seven years of Mr. Talmage's life were spent in Philadelphia. There his powers got "set." He learned what it was he could best do. He had the courage of his consciousness and he did it. Previously he might have felt it incumbent on him to give to pulpit traditions the homage of compliance—though at Syracuse "the more excellent way," any man's *own* way, so that he have the divining gift of genius and the nature a-tune to all high sympathies and purposes—had in glimpses come to him. He realized that it was his duty and mission in the world to make *it* hear the gospel. The church was not to him in numbers a select few, in organization a monopoly. It was meant to be the conqueror and transformer of the world. For seven years he wrought with much success on this theory, all the time realizing that his plans could come to fullness only under conditions that enabled him to build from the bottom up an organization which could get nearer to the masses and which would have no precedents to be afraid of as ghosts in its path. Hence he ceased from being the leading preacher in Philadelphia to become in Brooklyn the leading preacher in the world.

His work for nine years here, know all our readers. It began in a cramped brick rectangle, capable of holding 1,200, and he came to it on "the call" of nineteen. In less than two years that was exchanged for an iron structure, with raised seats, the interior curved like a horse-shoe, the pulpit a platform bridging the ends. That held 3,000 persons. It lasted just long enough to revolutionize church architecture in cities into harmony with common sense. Smaller duplicates of it started in every quarter, three in Brooklyn, two in New York, one in Montreal, one in Louisville, any number in Chicago, two in San Francisco, like numbers abroad. Then it burnt up, that from its ashes the present stately and most sensible structure might rise. Gothic, of brick and stone, cathedral-like above, amphitheatre-like below, it holds 5,000 as easily as one person, and all can hear and see equally well. In a large sense the people built these edifices.

Their architects were Leonard Vaux and John Welch respectively. It is sufficiently indicative to say in general of Dr. Talmage's work in the Tabernacle, that his audiences are always as many as the place will hold; that twenty-three papers in Christendom statedly publish his entire sermons and Friday-night discourses, exclusive of the dailies of the United States; that the papers girdle the globe, being published in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, Belfast, Toronto, Montreal, St. John's, Sidney, Melbourne, San Francisco, Chicago, Boston, Raleigh, New York, and many others. To pulpit labors of this responsibility should be added considerable pastoral work, the conduct of the Lay College, and constantly recurring lecturing and literary work, to fill out the public life of a very busy man.

The multiplicity, large results and striking progress of the labors of Dr. Talmage have made the foregoing more of a brief narrative of the epochs of his career than an account of the career itself. It has had to be so. Lack of space requires it. His work has had rather to be intimated in generalities than told in details. The filling in must come either from the knowledge of the reader or from intelligent inferences and conclusions, drawn from the few principal facts stated, and stated with care. This remains to be said: No other preacher addresses so many constantly. The words of no other preacher were ever before carried by so many types or carried so far. Types give him three continents for a church, and the English-speaking world for a congregation. The judgment of his generation will of course be divided upon him just as that of the next will not. That he is *a* topic in every newspaper is much more significant than the fact of what treatment it gives him. Only men of genius are universally commented on. The universality of the comment makes friends and foes alike prove the fact of the genius. That is what is impressive. As for the quality of the comment, it will, in nine cases out of ten, be much more a revelation of the character behind the pen which writes it than a true view or review of the man. This is necessarily so. The press and the pulpit in the main are defective judges of one another. The former rarely enters the inside of the latter's work. There is acquaintanceship, but not intimacy between them. Journals find out the *fact* of a preacher's power in time. Then they go looking for the causes Long before, however, the masses have felt the causes and have realized, not merely discovered, the fact. The penalty of being the leaders of great masses has, from Whitefield and Wesley to Spurgeon and Talmage, been to serve as the target for small wits. A constant source of attack on men of such magnitude always has been and will be the presses, which, by the common consent of mankind, are described and dispensed from all consideration, when they are rated Satanic. Their attacks confirm a man's right to respect and reputation, and are a proof of his influence and greatness. It can be truly said that while secular criticism in the United States favorably regards our subject in proportion to its intelligence and uprightness, the judgment of foreigners on him has long been an index to the judgment of posterity here. No other American is read so much and so constantly abroad. His extraordinary imagination, earnestness, descriptive powers and humor, his great art in grouping and arrangement, his wonderful mastery of words to illumine and alleviate human conditions and to interpret and inspire the harmonies of the better nature, are appreciated by all who can put themselves in sympathy with his originality of methods and his high consecration of purpose. His manner mates with his nature. It is each sermon in action. He presses the eyes, hands, his entire body, into the service of the illustrative truth. Gestures are the accompaniment of what he says. As he stands out before the immense throng, without a scrap of notes or manuscript before him, the effect produced can not be understood by those who have never seen it. The solemnity, the tears, the awful hush, as though the audience could not breathe again, are ofttimes painful.

His voice is peculiar, not musical, but productive of startling, strong effects, such as characterize no preacher on either side of the Atlantic. His power to grapple an audience and master it from text to peroration has no equal. No man was ever less self-conscious in his work. He feels a mission of evangelization on him as by the imposition of the Supreme. That mission he responds to by doing the duty that is nearest to him with all his might—as confident that he is under the care and order of a Divine Master as those who hear him are that they are under the spell of the greatest prose-poet that ever made the gospel his song and the redemption of the race the passion of his heart.

The following discourses were taken down by stenographic reporters and revised by Mr. Talmage *specially for this work.* On the occasion of their delivery the church was thronged beyond description, the streets around blockaded with people so that carriages could not pass, Mr. Talmage himself gaining admission only by the help of the police.

CHAPTER I.

A PERSONAL EXPLORATION IN HAUNTS OF VICE.

"When said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall ; and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. And he said unto me, Go in and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. So I went in and saw ; and behold every form of creeping things and abominable beasts."—Ezekiel, viii: 8, 9, 10.

So this minister of religion, Ezekiel, was commanded to the exploration of the sin of his day. He was not to stand outside the door guessing what it was, but was to go in and see for himself. He did not in vision say: "O Lord, I don't wan't to go in ; I dare not go in ; if I go in I might be criticised ; O Lord, please let me off ?" When God told Ezekiel to go in he went in, "and saw, and behold all manner of creeping things and abominable beasts." I, as a minister of religion, felt I had a Divine commission to explore the iniquities of our cities. I did not ask counsel of my session, or my Presbytery, or of the newspapers, but asking the companionship of three prominent police officials and two of the elders of my church, I unrolled my commission, and it said : "Son of man, dig into the wall ; and when I had digged into the wall, behold a door ; and he said, Go in and see the wicked abominations that are done here ; and I went in, and saw, and behold !" Brought up in the country and surrounded by much parental care, I had not until this autumn seen the haunts of iniquity. By the grace of God defended, I had never sowed any "wild oats." I had somehow been able to tell from various sources something about the iniquities of the great cities, and to preach against them; but I saw, in the destruction of a great multitude of the people, that there must be an infatuation and a temptation that had never been spoken about, and I said, "I will explore." I saw tens of thousands of men going down, and if there had been a spiritual percussion answering to the physical percussion, the whole air would have been full of the rumble, and roar, and crack, and thunder of the demolition, and this moment, if we should pause in our service, we should hear the crash, crash! Just as in the sickly season you sometimes hear the bell at the gate of the cemetery ringing almost incessantly, so I found that the bell at the gate of the cemetery where lost souls are buried was tolling by day and tolling by night. I said, "I will explore." I went as a physician goes into a small-pox hospital, or a fever lazzaretto, to see what practical and useful information I might get. That would be a foolish doctor who would stand outside the door of an invalid writing a Latin prescription. When the lecturer in a medical college is done with his lecture he takes the students into the dissecting room, and he shows them the reality. I am here this morning to report a plague, and to tell you how sin dissects the body, and dissects the mind, and dissects the soul. "Oh!" say you, "are you not afraid that in consequence of your exploration of the inquities of the city other persons may make exploration, and do themselves damage?" I reply: "If, in company with the Commissioner of Police, and the Captain of Police, and the Inspector of Police, and the company of two Christian gentlemen, and not with the spirit of curiosity, but that you may see sin in order the better to combat it, then, in the name of the eternal God, go? But, if not, then stay away. Wellington, standing in the battle of Waterloo when the bullets were buzzing around his head, saw a civilian on the field. He said to him, "Sir, what are you doing here? Be off?" "Why," replied the civilian, "there is no more danger here for me than there is for you." Then Wellington flushed up and said, "God and my country demand that I be here, but you have no errand here." Now I, as an officer in the army of Jesus Christ, went on this exploration, and on to this battlefield. If you bear a like commission, go; if not, stay away. But you say, "Don't you think that somehow your description of these places will induce people to go and see for themselves?" I answer, yes, just as much as the description of the yellow fever at Grenada would induce people to go down there and get the pestilence. It was told us there were hardly enough people alive to bury the dead, and I am going to tell you a story in these Sabbath morning sermons of places where they are all dead or dying. And I shall not gild iniquities. I shall play a dirge and not an anthem, and while I shall not put faintest blush on fairest cheek, I will kindle the cheeks of many a man into a conflagration, and I will make his ears tingle. But you say, "Don't you know that the papers are criticising you for the position you take?" I say, yes; and do you know how I feel about it! There is no man who is more indebted to the newspaper press than I am. My business is to preach the truth, and the wider the audience the newspaper press gives me, the wider my field is. As the secular and religious press of the United States and the Canadas, and of England and Ireland and Scotland and Australia and New Zealand, are giving me every week nearly three million souls for an audience, I say I am indebted to the press, anyhow. Go on! To the day of my death I cannot pay them what I owe them. So slash away, gentlemen. The more the merrier. If there is anything I despise, it is a dull time. Brisk criticism is a coarse Turkish towel, with which every public man needs every day to be rubbed down, in order to keep healthful circulation. Give my love to all the secular and religious editors, and full permission to run their steel pens clear through my sermons, from introduction to application.

It was ten o'clock of a calm, clear, star-lighted night when the carriage rolled with us from the bright part of the city down into the region where gambling and crime and death hold high carnival. When I speak of houses of dissipation, I do not refer to one sin, or five sins, but to all sins. As the horses halted, and, escorted by the officers of the law, we went in, we moved into a world of which we were as practically ignorant as though it had swung as far off from us as Mercury is from Saturn. No shout of revelry, no guffaw of laughter, but comparative silence. Not many signs of death, but the dead were there. As I moved through this place I said, "This is the home of lost souls." It was a Dante's Inferno; nothing to stir the mirth, but many things to fill the eyes with tears of pity. Ah! there were moral corpses. There were corpses on the stairway, corpses in the gallery, corpses in the gardens. Leper met leper, but no bandaged mouth kept back the breath. I felt that I was sitting on the iron coast against which Euroclydon had driven a hundred dismasted hulks—every moment more blackened hulks rolling in. And while I stood and waited for the going down of the storm and the lull of the sea, I bethought myself, this is an everlasting storm, and these billows always rage, and on each carcass that strewed the beach already had alighted a vulture—the long-beaked, filthy vulture of unending dispair—now picking into the corruption, and now on the black wing wiping the blood of a soul! No lark, no robin, no chaffinch, but vultures, vultures, vultures. I was reading of an incident that occurred in Pennsylvania a few weeks ago, where a naturalist had presented to him a deadly serpent, and he put it in a bottle and stood it in his studio, and one evening, while in the studio with his daughter, a bat flew in the window, extinguished the light, struck the bottle containing the deadly serpent, and in a few moments there was a shriek from the daughter, and in a few hours she was dead. She had been bitten of the serpent. Amid these haunts of death, in that midnight exploration I saw that there were lions and eagles and doves for insignia; but I thought to myself how inappropriate. Better the insignia of an adder and a bat.

First of all, I have to report as a result of this midnight exploration that all the sacred rhetoric about the costly magnificence of the haunts of iniquity is apocryphal. We were shown what was called the costliest and most magnificent specimen. I had often heard that the walls were adorned with masterpieces; that the fountains were bewitching in the gaslight; that the music was like the touch of a Thalberg or a Gottschalk; that the upholstery was imperial; that the furniture in some places was like the throne-room of the Tuilleries. It is all false. Masterpieces! There was not a painting worth $5, leaving aside the frame. Great daubs of color that no intelligent mechanic would put on his wall. A cross-breed between a chromo and a splash of poor paint! Music! Some of the homeliest creatures I ever saw squawked discord, accompanied by pianos out of tune!

Upholstery! Two characteristics; red and cheap. You have heard so much about the wonderful lights—blue and green and yellow and orange flashing across the dancers and the gay groups. Seventy-five cents' worth of chemicals would produce all that in one night. Tinsel gewgaws, tawdriness frippery, seemingly much of it bought at a second-hand furniture store and never paid for! For the most part, the inhabitants were repulsive. Here and there a soul on whom God had put the crown of beauty, but nothing comparable with the Christian loveliness and purity which you may see any pleasant afternoon on any of the thoroughfares of our great cities. Young man, you are a stark fool if you go to places of dissipation to see pictures, and hear music, and admire beautiful and gracious countenances. From Thomas's, or Dodworth's, or Gilmore's Band, in ten minutes you will hear more harmony than in a whole year of the racket and bang of the cheap orchestras of the dissolute. Come to me, and I will give you a letter of introduction to any one of five hundred homes in Brooklyn and New York, where you will see finer pictures and hear more beautiful music--music and pictures compared with which there is nothing worth speaking of in houses of dissipation. Sin, however pretentious, is almost always poor. Mirrors, divans, Chickering grand she cannot keep. The sheriff is after it with uplifted mallet, ready for the vendue. "Going! going! gone!

But, my friends, I noticed in all the haunts of dissipation that there was an attempt at music, however poor. The door swung open and shut to music; they stepped to music; they danced to music; they attempted nothing without music, and I said to myself, "If such inferior music has such power, and drum, and fife, and orchestra are enlisted in the service of the devil, what multipotent power there must be in music! and is it not high time that in all our churches and reform associations we tested how much charm there is in it to bring men off the wrong road to the right road?" Fifty times that night I said within myself, "If poor music is so powerful in a bad direction, why cannot good music be almost omnipotent in a good direction?" Oh! my friends, we want to drive men into the kingdom of God with a musical staff. We want to shut off the path of death with a musical bar. We want to snatch all the musical instruments from the service of the devil, and with organ, and cornet, and base viol, and piano and orchestra praise the Lord. Good Richard Cecil when seated in the pulpit, said that when Doctor Wargan was at the organ, he, Mr. Cecil, was so overpowered with the music that he found himself looking for the first chapter of Isaiah in the prayer book, wondering he could not find it. Oh! holy bewilderment. Let us send such men as Phillip Phillips, the Christian vocalist, all around the world, and Arbuckle, the cornest, with his "Robin Adair" set to Christian melody, and George Morgan with his Halleluah Chorus, and ten thousand Christian men with uplifted hosannas to capture this whole earth for God. Oh! my friends, we have had enough minor strains in the church; give us major strains. We have had enough dead marches in the church; play us those tunes which are played when an army is on a dead run to overtake an enemy. Give us the double-quick. We are in full gallop of cavalry charge. Forward, the whole line! Many a man who is unmoved by Christian argument surrenders to a Christian song.

Many a man under the power of Christian music has had a change take place in his soul and in his life equal to that which took place in the life of a man in Scotland, who for fifteen years had been a drunkard. Coming home late at night, as he touched the doorsill, his wife trembled at his coming. Telling the story afterward, she said, "I didn't dare go to bed lest he violently drag me forth. When he came home there was only about the half inch of the candle left in the socket. When he entered, he said: 'Where are the children?' and I said, 'They are up stairs in bed.' He said, 'Go and fetch them,' and I went up and I knelt down and I prayed God to defend me and my children from their cruel father. And then I brought them down. He took up the eldest in his arms and kissed her and said, 'My dear lass, the Lord hath sent thee a father home to-night.' And so he did with the second, and then he took up the third of the children and said, 'My dear boy, the Lord hath sent thee home a father to-night.' And then he took up the babe and said, 'My darling babe, the Lord hath sent thee home a father to-night.' And then he put his arm around me and kissed me, and said, 'My dear lass, the Lord hath sent thee home a husband to-night.' Why, sir, I had na' heard anything like that for fourteen years. And he prayed and he was comforted, and my soul was restored, for I didn't live as I ought to have lived, close to God. My trouble had broken me down." Oh! for such a transformation in some of the homes of Brooklyn to-day. By holy conspiracy, in the last song of the morning, let us sweep every prodigal into the kingdom of our God. Oh! ye chanters above Bethlehem, come and hover this morning and give us a snatch of the old tune about "good will to men."

But I have, also to report of that midnight exploration, that I saw something that amazed me more than I can tell. I do not want to tell it, for it will take pain to many hearts far away, and I cannot comfort them. But I must tell it. In all these haunts of iniquity I found young men with the ruddy color of country health on their cheek, evidently just come to town for business, entering stores, and shops, and offices. They had helped gather the summer grain. There they were in haunts of iniquity, the look on their cheek which is never on the cheek except when there has been hard work on the farm and in the open air. Here were these young men who had heard how gayly a boat dances on the edge of a maelstrom, and they were venturing. O God! will a few weeks do such an awful work for a young man? O Lord! hast thou forgotten what transpired when they knelt at the family altar that morning when he came away, and how father's voice trembled in the prayer, and mother and sister sobbed as they lay on the floor? I saw that young man when he first confronted evil. I saw it was the first night there. I saw on him a defiant look, as much as to say, "I am mightier than sin." Then I saw him consult with iniquity. Then I saw him waver and doubt. Then I saw going over his countenance the shadow of sad reflections, and I knew from his looks there was a powerful memory stirring his soul. I think there was a whisper going out from the gaudy upholstery, saying, "My son, go home." I think there was a hand stretched out from under the curtains—a hand tremulous with anxiety, a hand that had been worn with work, a hand partly wrinkled with age, that seemed to beckon him away, and so goodness and sin seemed to struggle in that young man's soul; but sin triumphed, and he surrendered to darkness and to death—an ox to the slaughter. Oh! my soul, is this the end of all the good advice? Is this the end of all the prayers that have been made?

Have the clusters of the country vineyard been thrown into this great wine-press where Despair and Anguish and Death trample, and the vintage is a vintage of blood? I do not feel so sorry for that young man who, brought up in city life, knows beforehand what are all the surrounding temptations; but God pity the country lad unsuspecting and easily betrayed. Oh! young man from the farmhouse among the hills, what have your parents done that you should do this against them? Why are you bent on killing with trouble her who gave you birth? Look at her fingers—what makes them so distort? Working for you. Do you prefer to that honest old face the berouged cheek of sin? Write home to-morrow morning by the first mail, cursing your mother's white hair, cursing her stooped shoulder, cursing her old arm-chair, cursing the cradle in which she rocked you. "Oh!" you say, "I can't, I can't." You are doing it already. There is something on your hands, on your forehead, on your feet. It is red. What is it? The blood of a mother's broken heart! When you were threshing the harvest apples from that tree at the corner of the field last summer, did you think you would ever come to this? Did you think that the sharp sickle of death would cut you down so soon? If I thought I could break the infatuation I would come down from the pulpit and throw my arms around you and beg you to stop. Perhaps I am a little more sympathetic with such because I was a country lad. It was not until fifteen years of age that I saw a great city. I remember how stupendous New York looked as I arrived at Cortlandt Ferry. And now that I look back and remember that I had a nature all awake to hilarities and amusements, it is a wonder that I escaped. I was saying this to a gentleman in New York a few days ago, and he said, "Ah! sir, I guess there were some prayers hovering about." When I see a young man coming from the tame life of the country and going down in the city ruin, I am not surprised. My only surprise is that any escape, considering the allurements. I was a few days ago on the St. Lawrence river, and I said to the captain, "What a swift stream this is." "Oh!" he replied, "seventy-five miles from here it is ten times swifter. Why, we have to employ an Indian pilot, and we give him $1,000 for his summer's work, just to conduct our boats through between the rocks and the islands, so swift are the rapids." Well, my friends, every man that comes into New York and Brooklyn life comes into the rapids, and the only question is whether he shall have safe or unsafe pilotage. Young man, your bad habits will be reported at the homestead. You cannot hide them. There are people who love to carry bad news, and there will be some accursed old gossip who will wend her infernal step toward the old homestead, and she will sit down, and, after she has a while wriggled in the chair, she will say to your old parents, "Do you know your son drinks?" Then your parents will get white about the lips, and your mother will ask to have the door set a little open for the fresh air, and before that old gossip leaves the place she will have told your parents all about the places where you are accustomed to go. Then your mother will come out, and she will sit down on the step where you used to play, and she will cry and cry. Then she will be sick, and the gig of the country doctor will come up the country lane, and the horse will be tied at the swing-gate, and the prescription will fail, and she will get worse and worse, and in her delirium she will talk about nothing but you. Then the farmers will come to the funeral, and tie the horses at the rail fence about the house, and they will talk about what ailed the one that died, and one will say it was intermittent, and another will say it was congestion, and another will say it was premature old age; but it will be neither intermittent, nor congestion, nor old age. In the ponderous book of Almighty God it will be recorded for everlasting ages to read that you killed her. Our language is very fertile in describing different kinds of crime. Slaying a man is homicide. Slaying a brother is fratricide. Slaying a father is patricide. Slaying a mother is matricide. It takes two words to describe your crime—patricide and matricide.

I must leave to other Sabbath mornings the unrolling of the scroll which I have this morning only laid on your table. We have come only to the vestibule of the subject. I have been treating of generals. I shall come to specifics. I have not told you of all the styles of people I saw in the haunts of iniquity. Before I get through with these sermons and next Sabbath morning I will answer the question everywhere asked me, why does municipal authority allow these haunts of iniquity?

I will show all the obstacles in the way. Sirs, before I get through with this course of Sabbath morning sermons, by the help of the eternal God, I will save ten thousand men! And in the execution of this mission I defy all earth and hell.

But I was going to tell you of an incident. I said to the officer, "Well, let us go; I am tired of this scene;" and as we passed out of the haunts of iniquity into the fresh air, a soul passed in. What a face that was! Sorrow only half covered up with an assumed joy. It was a woman's face. I saw as plainly as on the page of a book the tragedy. You know that there is such a thing as somnambulism. or walking in one's sleep. Well, in a fatal somnambulism, a soul started off from her father's house. It was very dark, and her feet were cut of the rocks; but on she went until she came to the verge of a chasm, and she began to descend from bowlder to bowlder down over the rattling shelving—for you know while walking in sleep people will go where they would not go when awake. Further on down, and further, where no owl of the night or hawk of the day would venture. On down until she touched the depth of the chasm. Then, in walking sleep, she began to ascend the other side of the chasm, rock above rock, as the roe boundeth. Without having her head to swim with the awful steep, she scaled the height. No eye but the sleepless eye of God watched her as she went down one side the chasm and came up the other side the chasm. It was an August night, and a storm was gathering, and a loud burst of thunder awoke her from her somnambulism, and she said, "Whither shall I fly?" and with an affrighted eye she looked back upon the chasm she had crossed, and she looked in front, and there was a deeper chasm before her. She said, "What shall I do? Must I die here?" And as she bent over the one chasm, she heard the sighing of the past; and as she bent over the other chasm, she heard the portents of the future. Then she sat down on the granite crag, and cried: "O! for my father's house! O! for the cottage, where I might die amid embowering honeysuckle! O! the past! O! the future! O! father! O! mother! O! God!" But the storm that had been gathering culminated, and wrote with finger of lightning on the sky just above the horizon, "The way of the transgressor is hard." And then thunder-peal after thunder-peal uttered it: "Which forsaketh the guide of her youth and forgetteth the covenant of her God. Destroyed without remedy!" And the cavern behind echoed it, "Destroyed without remedy!" And the chasm before echoed it, "Destroyed without remedy!" There she perished, her cut and bleeding feet on the edge of one chasm, her long locks washed of the storm dripping over the other chasm.

But by this time our carriage had reached the curbstone of my dwelling, and I awoke, and behold it was a dream!

CHAPTER II.

THE LEPERS OF HIGH LIFE.

"Policeman, what of the night?"—Isaiah xxi: 11.

The original of the text may be translated either "watchman" or "policeman." I have chosen the latter word. The olden-time cities were all thus guarded. There were roughs, and thugs, and desperadoes in Jerusalem, as well as there are in New York and Brooklyn. The police headquarters of olden time was on top of the city wall. King Solomon, walking incognito through the streets, reports in one of his songs that he met these officials. King Solomon must have had a large posse of police to look after his royal grounds, for he had twelve thousand blooded horses in his stables, and he had millions of dollars in his palace, and he had six hundred wives, and, though the palace was large, no house was ever large enough to hold two women married to the same man; much less could six hundred keep the peace. Well, the night was divided into three watches, the first watch reaching from sundown to 10 o'clock; the second watch from 10 o'clock to two in the morning; the third watch from two in the morning to sunrise. An Idumean, anxious about the prosperity of the city, and in regard to any danger that might threaten it, accosts an officer just as you might any night upon our streets, saying, "Policeman, what of the night?" Policemen, more than any other people, understand a city. Upon them are vast responsibilities for small pay. The police officer of your city gets $1,100 salary, but he may spend only one night of an entire month in his family. The detective of your city gets $1,500 salary, but from January to January there is not an hour that he may call his own. Amid cold and heat and tempest, and amid the perils of the bludgeon of the midnight assassin, he does his work. The moon looks down upon nine-tenths of the iniquity of our great cities. What wonder, then, that a few weeks ago, in the interest of morality and religion, I asked the question of the text, "Policeman, what of the night?" In addition to this powerful escortage, I asked two elders of the church to accompany me; not because they were any better than the other elders of the church, but because they were more muscular, and I was resolved that in any case where anything more than spiritual defense was necessary, to refer the whole matter to their hands! I believe in muscular Christianity. I wish that our theological seminaries, instead of sending out so many men with dyspepsia and liver complaint and all out of breath by the time they have climbed to the top of the pulpit stairs, would, through gymnasiums and other means, send into the pulpit physical giants as well as spiritual athletes. I do wish I could consecrate to the Lord two hundred and fifty pounds avoirdupois weight? But, borrowing the strength of others, I started out on the midnight exploration. I was preceded in this work by Thomas Chalmers, who opened every door of iniquity in Edinburgh before he established systematic amelioration, and preceded by Thomas Guthrie, who explored all the squalor of the city before he established the ragged schools, and by every man who has done anything to balk crime, and help the tempted and the destroyed. Above all, I followed in the footsteps of Him who was derided by the hypocrities and the sanhedrims of his day, because he persisted in exploring the deepest moral slush of his time, going down among demoniacs and paupers and adulteresses, never so happy as when he had ten lepers to cure. Some of you may have been surprised that there was a great hue and cry raised before these sermons were begun, and sometimes the hue and cry was made by professors of religion. I was not surprised. The simple fact is that in all our churches there are lepers who do not want their scabs touched, and they foresaw that before I got through with this series of sermons I would show up some of the wickedness and rottenness of what is called the upper class. The devil howled because he knew I was going to hit him hard! Now, I say to all such men, whether in the church or out of it, "Ye hypocrites, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

I noticed in my midnight exploration with these high officials that the haunts of sin are chiefly supported by men of means and men of wealth. The young men recently come from the country, of whom I spoke last Sabbath morning, are on small salary, snd they have but little money to spend in sin, and if they go into luxuriant iniquity the employer finds it out by the inflamed eye and the marks of dissipation, and they are discharged. The luxuriant places of iniquity are supported by men, who come down from the fashionable avenues of New York, and cross over from some of the finest mansions of Brooklyn. Prominent business men from Boston, Philadelphia, and Chicago, and Cincinnati patronize these places of crime. I could call the names of prominent men in our cluster of cities who patronize these places of iniquity, and I may call their names before I get through this course of sermons, though the fabric of New York and Brooklyn society tumble into wreck. Judges of courts, distinguished lawyers, officers of the church, political orators standing on Republican and Democratic and Greenback platforms talking about God and good morals until you might suppose them to be evangelists expecting a thousand converts in one night. Call the roll of dissipation in the haunts of iniquity any night, and if the inmates will answer, you will find there stockbrokers from Wall street, large importers from Broadway, iron merchants, leather merchants, cotton merchants, hardware merchants, wholesale grocers, representatives from all the commercial and wealthy classes. Talk about the heathenism below Canal street! There is a worse heathenism above Canal street. I prefer that kind of heathenism which wallows in filth and disgusts the beholder rather than that heathenism which covers up its walking putrefaction with camel's-hair shawl and point lace, and rides in turnouts worth $3,000, liveried driver ahead and rosetted flunky behind. We have been talking so much about the gospel for the masses; now let us talk a little about the gospel for the lepers of society, for the millionaire sots, for the portable lazzarettos of upper-tendom. It is the iniquity that comes down from the higher circles of society that supports the haunts of crime, and it is gradually turning our cities into Sodoms and Gomorrahs waiting for the fire and brimstone tempest of the Lord God who whelmed the cities of the plain. We want about five hundred Anthony Comstocks to go forth and explore and expose the abominations of high life. For eight or ten years there stood within sight of the most fashionable New York drive a Moloch temple, a brown-stone hell on earth, which neither the Mayor, nor the judges, nor the police dared touch, when Anthony Comstock, a Christian man of less than average physical stature, and with cheek scarred by the knife of a desperado whom he had arrested, walked into that palace of the damned on Fifth avenue, and in the name of God put an end to to it, the priestess presiding at the orgies retreating by suicide into the lost world, her bleeding corpse found in her own bath-tub. May the eternal God have mercy on our cities. Gilded sin comes down from these high places into the upper circles of iniquity, and then on gradually down, until in five years it makes the whole pilgrimage, from the marble pillar on the brilliant avenue clear down to the cellars of Water street. The officer on that midnight exploration said to me: "Look at them now, and look at them three years from now when all this glory has departed; they'll be a heap of rags in the station-house." Another of the officers said to me: "That is the daughter of one of the wealthiest families on Madison square."

But I have something more amazing to tell you than that the men of means and wealth support these haunts of iniquity, and that is, that they are chiefly supported by heads of families—fathers and husbands, with the awful perjury of broken marriage vows upon them, with a niggardly stipend left at home for the support of their families, going forth with their thousands for the diamonds and wardrobe and equipage of iniquity. In the name of heaven, I denounce this public iniquity. Let such men be hurled out of decent circles. Let them be hurled out from business circles. If they will not repent, overboard with them! I lift one-half the burden of malediction from the unpitied head of offending woman, and hurl it on the blasted pate of offending man! Society needs a new division of its anathema. By what law of justice does burning excoriation pursue offending woman down off the precipices of destruction, while offending man, kid-gloved, walks in refined circles, invited up if he have money, advanced into political recognition, while all the doors of high life open at the first rap of his gold-headed cane? I say, if you let one come back, let them both come back. If one must go down, let both go down. I give you as my opinion that the eternal perdition of all other sinners will be a heaven compared with the punishment everlasting of that man who, turning his back upon her whom he swore to protect and defend until death, and upon his children, whose destiny may be decided by his example, goes forth to seek affectional alliances elsewhere. For such a man the portion will be fire, and hail, and tempest, and darkness, and blood, and anguish, and despair forever, forever, forever! My friends, there has got to be a reform in this matter, or American society will go to pieces. Under the head of "incompatibility of temper," nine-tenths of the abomination goes on. What did you get married for if your dispositions are incompatible? "Oh!" you say, "I rushed into it without thought" Then you ought to be willing to suffer the punishment for making a fool of yourself! Incompatibility of temper! You are responsible for at least a half of the incompatibility. Why are you not honest and willing to admit either that you did not control your temper, or that you had already broken your marriage oath? In nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of the thousand, incompatibility is a phrase to cover up wickedness already enacted. I declare in the presence of this city and in the presence of the world that heads of families are supporting these haunts of iniquity. I wish there might be a police raid lasting a great while, that they would just go down through all these places of sin and gather up all the prominent business men of the city, and march them down through the street followed by about twenty reporters to take their names and put them in full capitals in the next day's paper! Let such a course be undertaken in our cities, and in six months there would be eighty per cent. off your public crime. It is not now the young men and the boys that need so much looking after; it is their fathers and mothers. Let heads of families cease to patronize places of iniquity, and in a short time they would crumble to ruin.

But you meet me with the question, "Why don't the city authorities put an end to such places of iniquity?" I answer in regard to Brooklyn, the work has already been done. Six years ago there were in the radius of your City Hall thirty-eight gambling saloons. They are all broken up. The ivory and wooden "chips" that came from the gambling-hells into the Police Headquarters came in by the peck. How many inducements were offered to our officials, such as: "This will be worth a thousand dollars to you if you will let it go on." "This will be worth five thousand if you will only let it go on." But our commissioners of police, mightier than any bribe, pursued their work until, while beyond the city limits there may be exceptions, within the city limits of Brooklyn there is not a gambling-hell, or policy-shop, or a house of death so pronounced. There are underground iniquities and hidden scenes, but none so pronounced. Every Monday morning all the captains of the police make reports in regard to their respective precincts. When the work began, the police in authority at that time said: "Oh! it can't be done; we can't get into these places of iniquity to see them, and hence we can't break them up." "Then," said the commissioners of police, "break in the doors;" and it is astonishing how soon after the shoulders of a stout policeman goes against the door, it gets off its hinges. Some of the captains of police said: "This thing has been going on so long, it cannot be crushed." "Then," said the commissioners of police, "we'll get other captains of police." The work went on until now, if a reformer wants the commissioners of police to show him the haunts of iniquity in Brooklyn, there are none to show him. If you know a single case that is an exception to what I say, report it to me at the close of this service at the foot of this platform, and I will warrant that within two hours after you report the case Commissioner Jourdan, Superintendent Campbell, Inspector Waddy, and as many of the twenty-five detectives and of the five hundred and fifty policemen as are necessary will come down on it like an Alpine avalanche. If you do not report it, it is because you are a coward, or else because you are in the sin yourself, and you do not want it shown up. You shall bear the whole responsibility, and it shall not be thrown on the hard-working and heroic detective and police force. But you say: "How has this general clearing out of gambling-hells and places of iniquity been accomplished?" Our authorities have been backed up by a high public sentiment. In a city which has on its judicial bench such magnificent men as Neilson, and Reynolds, and McCue, and Moore, and Pratt, and others whom I am not fortunate enough to know, there must be a mighty impulse upward toward God and good morals. We have in the high places of this city men not only with great heads, but with great hearts. A young man disappeared from his father's house about the time the Brooklyn Theater burned, and it was supposed that he had been destroyed in that ruin. The father, broken-hearted, sold his property in Brooklyn, and in desolation left the city. Recently the wandering son came back. He could not find his father, who, in departing, had given no idea of his destination. The case was reported to a man high in official position, and he sat down and wrote a letter to all the chiefs of police in the United States, in order that he might deliver that prodigal son into the arms of his broken-hearted father. A few days ago it was found that the father was in California. I understand that son is now on the way to meet him, and it will be the parable of the prodigal son over again when they embrace each other, and the father says: "Rejoice with me, for this my son was dead and is alive again, was lost and is found." I have forgotten the name of the father, I have forgotten the name of his son; but I have not forgotten the name of the officer whose sympathetic heart beats so loud under his badge of office. It was Patrick Campbell, Superintendent of the Brooklyn police. I do not mention these things as a matter of city pride, nor as a matter of exultation, but of gratitude to God that Brooklyn to-day stands foremost among American cities in its freedom from places of iniquity. But Brooklyn has a large share of sin. Where do the people of Brooklyn go when they propose to commit abomination? To New York. I was told in the midnight exploration in New York with the police that there are some places almost entirely supported by men and women from Brooklyn. We are one city after all—one now before the bridge is completed, to be more thoroughly one when the bridge is done.

Well, then, you press me with another question: "Why don't the public authorities of New York extirpate these haunts of iniquity?" Before I give you a definite answer I want to say that the obstacles in that city are greater than in any city on this continent. It is so vast. It is the landing-place of European immigration. Its wealth is mighty to establish and defend places of iniquity. Twice a year there are incursions of people from all parts of the land coming on the spring and the fall trade. It requires twenty times the municipal energy to keep order in New York that it does in any city from Portland to San Francisco. But still you pursue me with the question, and I am to answer it by telling you that there is infinite fault and immensity of blame to be divided between three parties. First, the police of New York city. So far as I know them they are courteous gentlemen. They have had great discouragement, they tell me, in the fact that when they arrest crime and bring it before the courts the witnesses will not appear lest they criminate themselves. They tell me also that they have been discouraged by the fact that so many suits have been brought against them for damages. But after all, my friends, they must take their share of blame. I have come to the conclusion, after much research and investigation, that there are captains of police in New York who are in complicity with crime—men who make thousands of dollars a year for the simple fact that they will not tell, and will permit places of iniquity to stand month after month, and year after year. I am told that there are captains of police in New York who get a percentage on every bottle of wine sold in the haunts of death, and that they get a revenue from all the shambles of sin. What a state of things this is! In the Twenty-ninth precinct of New York there are one hundred and twenty-one dens of death. Night after night, month after month, year after year, untouched. In West Twenty-sixth street and West Twenty-seventh street and West Thirty-first street there are whole blocks that are a pandemonium. There are between five and six hunared dens of darkness in the city of New York, where there are 2,500 policemen. Not long ago there was a masquerade ball in which the masculine and feminine offenders of society were the participants, and some of the police danced in the masquerade and distributed the prizes! There is the grandest opportunity that has ever opened, for any American, open now. It is for that man in high official position who shall get into his stirrups and say, "Men, follow?" and who shall in one night sweep around and take all of these leaders of iniquity, whether on suspicion or on positive proof, saying, "I'll take the responsibility, come on! I put my private property and my political aspirations and my life into this crusade against the powers of darkness." That man would be Mayor of the city of New York. That man would be fit to be President of the United States.

But the second part of the blame I must put at the door of the District Attorney of New York. I understand he is an honorable gentleman, but he has not time to attend to all these cases. Literally, there are thousands of cases unpursued for lack of time. Now, I say, it is the business of New York to give assistants, and clerks, and help to the District Attorney until all these places shall go down in quick retribution.

But the third part of the blame, and the heaviest part of it, I put on the moral and Christian people of our cities, who are guilty of most culpable indifference on this whole subject. When Tweed stole his millions large audiences were assembled in indignation, Charles O'Çonor was retained, committees of safety and investigation were appointed, and a great stir made; but night by night there is a theft and a burglary of city morals as much worse than Tweed's robberies as his were worse than common shop-lifting, and it has very little opposition. I tell you what New York wants; it wants indignation meetings in Cooper Institute and Academy of Music and Chickering and Irving Halls to compel the public authorities to do their work and to send the police, with clubs and lanterns and revolvers, to turn off the colored lights of the dance-houses, and to mark for confiscation the trunks and wardrobes and furniture and scenery, and to gather up all the keepers, and all the inmates, and all the patrons, and march them out to the Tombs, fife and drum sounding the Rogue's March.

While there are men smoking their cigarettes, with their feet on Turkish divans, shocked that a minister of religion should explore and expose the iniquity of city life, there are raging underneath our great cities a Cotopaxi, a Stromboli, a Vesuvius, ready to bury us in ashes and scoria deeper than that which overwhelmed Pompeii and Herculaneum. Oh! I wish the time would come for the plowshare of public indignation to push through and rip up and turn under those parts of New York which are the plague of the nation. Now is the time to hitch up the team to this plowshare. In this time, when Mr. Cooper is Mayor, and Mr. Kelly is Comptroller, and Mr. Nichols is Police Commissioner, and Superintendent Walling wears the badge of office, and there is on the judicial benches of New York an array of the best men that have ever occupied those positions since the foundation of the city—Recorder Hackett, Police Magistrates Kilbreth, Wandell, Morgan and Duffy; such men as Gildersleeve, and Sutherland, and Davis, and Curtis; and on the United States Court bench in New York such men as Benedict, and Blatchford, and Choate—now is the time to make an extirpation of iniquity. Now is the time for a great crusade, and for the people of our cities in great public assemblages to say to police authority:

"Go ahead, and we will back you with our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor."

I must adjourn until next Sabbath morning much of what I wanted to say about certain forms of iniquity which I saw rampant in the night of my exploration with the city officials. But before I stop this morning I want to have one word with a class of men with whom people have so little patience that they never get a kind word of invitation. I mean the men who have forsaken their homes. Oh! my brother, return. You say: "I can't; I have no home; my home is broken up." Re-establish your home. It has been done in other cases, why may it not be done in your case? "Oh," you say, "we parted for life; we have divided our property; we have divided our effects." I ask you, did you divide the marriage ring of that bright day when you started life together? Did you divide your family Bible? If so, where did you divide it? Across the Old Testament, where the Ten Commandments denounce your sin, or across the New Testament, where Christ says: "Blessed are the pure in heart?" Or did you divide it between the Old and the New Testaments, right across the family record of weddings and births and deaths? Did you divide the cradle in which you rocked your first born? Did you divide the little grave in the cemetery, over which you stood with linked arms, looking down in awful bereavement? Above all, I ask you, did you divide your hope for heaven, so that there is no full hope left for either of you? Go back! There may be a great gulf between you and once happy domesticity; but Christ will bridge that gulf. It may be a bridge of sighs. Turn toward it. Put your foot on the over-arching span. Hear it! It is a voice unrolling from the throne: "He that overcometh shall inherit all things, and I will be unto him a God, and he shall be my son; but the unbelieving, and the sorcerers, and the whoremongers, and the adulterers, and the idolators, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone—which is the second death!"

CHAPTER III.

THE GATES OF HELL.

"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it."–St. Matthew xvi: 18.

"It is only 10 o'clock," said the officer of the law, as we got into the carriage for the midnight exploration—"it is only 10 o'clock, and it is too early to see the places that we wish to see, for the theaters have not yet let out." I said, "What do you mean by that?" "Well," he said, "the places of iniquity are not in full blast until the people have time to arrive from the theaters." So we loitered on, and the officer told the driver to stop on a street where is one of the costliest and most brilliant gambling-houses in the city of New York. As we came up in front all seemed dark. The blinds were down; the door was guarded; but after a whispering of the officer with the guard at the door, we were admitted into the hall, and thence into the parlors, around one table finding eight or ten men in mid-life, well-dressed—all the work going on in silence, save the noise of the rattling "chips" on the gaming-table in one parlor, and the revolving ball of the roulette table in the other parlor. Some of these men, we were told, had served terms in prison; some were ship-wrecked bankers and brokers and money-dealers, and some were going their first rounds of vice—but all intent upon the table, as large or small fortunes moved up and down before them. Oh! there was something awfully solemn in the silence—the intense gaze, the suppressed emotion of the players. No one looked up. They all had money in the rapids, and I have no doubt some saw, as they sat there, horses and carriages, and houses and lands, and home and family rushing down into the vortex. A man's life would not have been worth a farthing in that presence had he not been accompanied by the police, if he had been supposed to be on a Christian errand of observation. Some of these men went by private key, some went in by careful introduction, some were taken in by the patrons of the establishment. The officer of the law told me: "None get in here except by police mandate, or by some letter of a patron." While we were there a young man came in, put his money down on the roulette-table, and lost; put more money down on the roulette-table, and lost; put more money down on the roulette-table, and lost; then feeling in his pockets for more money, finding none, in severe silence he turned his back upon the scene and passed out. All the literature about the costly magnificence of such places is untrue. Men kept their hats on and smoked, and there was nothing in the upholstery or the furniture to forbid. While we stood there men lost their property and lost their souls. Oh! merciless place. Not once in all the history of that gaming-house has there been one word of sympathy uttered for the losers at the game. Sir Horace Walpole said that a man dropped dead in front of one of the club-houses of London; his body was carried into the club-house, and the members of the club began immediately to bet as to whether he were dead or alive, and when it was proposed to test the matter by bleeding him, it was only hindered by the suggestion that it would be unfair to some of the players! In these gaming-houses of our cities, men have their property wrung away from them, and then they go out, some of them to drown their grief in strong drink, some to ply the counterfeiter's pen, and so restore their fortunes, some resort to the suicide's revolver, but all going down, and that work proceeds day by day, and night by night, until it is estimated that every day in Christendom eighty million dollars pass from hand to hand through gambling practices, and every year in Christendom one hundred and twenty-three billion, one hundred million dollars change hands in that way.

"But," I said, "it is 11 o'clock, and we must be off." We passed out into the hallway and so into the street, the burly guard slamming the door of the house after us, and we got into the carriage and rolled on toward the gates of hell. You know about the gates of heaven. You have often heard them preached about. There are three to each point of the compass. On the north, three gates; on the south, three gates; on the east, three gates; on the west, three gates; and each gate is of solid pearl. Oh! gate of heaven; may we all get into it. But who shall describe the gates of hell spoken of in my text? These gates are burnished until they sparkle and glisten in the gas-light. They are mighty, and set in sockets of deep and dreadful masonry. They are high, so that those who are in may not clamber over and get out. They are heavy, but they swing easily in to let those go in who are to be destroyed. Well, my friends, it is always safe to go where God tells you to go, and God had told me to go through these gates of hell, and explore and report, and, taking three of the high police authorities and two of the elders of my church, I went in, and I am here this morning to sketch the gates of hell. I remember, when the Franco-German war was going on, that I stood one day in Paris looking at the gates of the Tuilleries, and I was so absorbed in the sculpturing at the top of the gates—the masonry and the bronze—that I forgot myself, and after awhile, looking down, I saw that there were officers of the law scrutinizing me, supposing, no doubt, I was a German, and looking at those gates for adverse purposes. But, my friends, we shall not stand looking at the outside of the gates of hell. Through this midnight exploration I shall tell you of both sides, and I shall tell you what those gates are made of. With the hammer of God's truth I shall pound on the brazen panels, and with the lantern of God's truth I shall flash a light upon the shining hinges.

Gate the first: Impure literature. Anthony Comstock seized twenty tons of bad books, plates, and letter-press, and when our Professor Cochran, of the Polytechnic Institute, poured the destructive acids on those plates, they smoked in the righteous annihilation. And yet a great deal of the bad literature of the day is not gripped of the law. It is strewn in your parlors; it is in your libraries. Some of your children read it at night after they have retired, the gas-burner swung as near as possible to their pillow. Much of this literature is under the title of scientific information. A book agent with one of these infernal books, glossed over with scientific nomenclature, went into a hotel and sold in one day a hundred copies, and sold them all to women! It is appalling that men and women who can get through their family physician all the useful information they may need, and without any contamination, should wade chin deep through such accursed literature under the plea of getting useful knowledge, and that printing-presses, hoping to be called decent, lend themselves to this infamy. Fathers and mothers, be not deceived by the title, "medical works." Nine-tenths of those books come hot from the lost world, though they may have on them the names of the publishing-houses of New York and Philadelphia. Then there is all the novelette literature of the day flung over the land by the million. As there are good novels that are long, so I suppose there may be good novels that are short, and so there may be a good novelette, but it is the exception. No one—mark this—no one systematically reads the average novelette of this day and keeps either integrity or virtue. The most of these novelettes are written by broken-down literary men for small compensation, on the principle that, having failed in literature elevated and pure, they hope to succeed in the tainted and the nasty. Oh! this is a wide gate of hell. Every panel is made out of a bad book or newspaper. Every hinge is the interjoined type of a corrupt printing-press. Every bolt or lock of that gate is made out of the plate of an unclean pictorial. In other words, there are a million men and women in the United States to-day reading themselves into hell! When in your own beautiful city a prosperous family fell into ruins through the misdeeds of one of its members, the amazed mother said to the officer of the law: "Why, I never supposed there was anything wrong. I never thought there could be anything wrong." Then she sat weeping in silence for some time, and said: "Oh! I have got it now! I know, I now! I found in her bureau after she went away a bad book. That's what slew her." These leprous booksellers have gathered up the catalogues of all the male and female seminaries in the United States, catalogues containing the names and the residences of all the students, and circulars of death are sent to every one, without any exception. Can you imagine anything more deathful? There is not a young person, male or female, or an old person, who has not had offered to him or her a bad book or a bad picture.

Scour your house to find out whether there are any of these adders coiled on your parlor center-table, or coiled amid the toilet set on the dressing-case. I adjure you before the sun goes down to explore your family libraries with an inexorable scrutiny. Remember that one bad book or bad picture may do the work for eternity. I want to arouse all your suspicions about novelettes. I want to put you on the watch against everything that may seem like surreptitious correspondence through the postoffice. I want you to understand that impure literature is one of the broadest, highest, mightiest gates of the lost.

Gate the second: The dissolute dance. You shall not divert me to the general subject of dancing. Whatever you may think of the parlor dance, or the methodic motion of the body to sounds of music in the family or the social circle, I am not now discussing that question. I want you to unite with me this morning in recognizing the fact that there is a dissolute dance. You know of what I speak. It is seen not only in the low haunts of death, but in elegant mansions. It is the first step to eternal ruin for a great multitude of both sexes. You know, my friends, what postures, and attitudes, and figures are suggested of the devil. They who glide into the dissolute dance glide over an inclined plane, and the dance is swifter and swifter, wilder and wilder, until with the speed of lightning they whirl off the edges of a decent life into a fiery future. This gate of hell swings across the Axminster of many a fine parlor, and across the ball-room of the summer watering-place. You have no right, my brother, my sister—you have no right to take an attitude to the sound of music which would be unbecoming in the absence of music. No Chickering grand of city parlor or fiddle of mountain picnic can consecrate that which God hath cursed.

Gate the third: Indiscreet apparel. The attire of woman for the last four or five years has been beautiful and graceful beyond anything I have known; but there are those who will always carry that which is right into the extraordinary and indiscreet. I am told that there is a fashion about to come in upon us that is shocking to all righteousness. I charge Christian women, neither by style of dress nor adjustment of apparel, to become administrative of evil. Perhaps none else will dare to tell you, so I will tell you that there are multitudes of men who owe their eternal damnation to the boldness of womanly attire. Show me the fashion-plates of any age between this and the time of Louis XVI., of France, and Henry VIII., of England, and I will tell you the type of morals or immorals of that age or that year. No exception to it. Modest apparel means a righteous people. Immodest apparel always means a contaminated and depraved society. You wonder that the city of Tyre was destroyed with such a terrible destruction. Have you ever seen the fashion-plate of the city of Tyre? I will show it to you:

> "Moreover, the Lord saith, because the daughters of Zion are haughty and walk with stretched-forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet, in that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the rings and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping-pins."

That is the fashion-plate of ancient Tyre. And do you wonder that the Lord God in His indignation blotted out the city, so that fishermen to-day spread their nets where that city once stood?

Gate the fourth: Alcoholic beverage. In our midnight exploration we saw that all the scenes of wickedness were under the enchantment of the wine-cup. That was what the waitresses carried on the platter. That was what glowed on the table. That was what shone in illuminated gardens. That was what flushed the cheeks of the patrons who came in. That was what staggered the step of the patrons as they went out. Oh! the wine-cup is the patron of impurity. The officers of the law that night told us that nearly all the men who go into the shambles of death go in intoxicated, the mental and the spiritual abolished, that the brute may triumph. Tell me that a young man drinks, and I know the whole story. If he become a captive of the wine-cup, he will become a captive of all other vices; only give him time. No one ever runs drunkenness alone. That is a carrion-crow that goes in a flock, and when you see that beak ahead, you may know the other beaks are coming. In other words, the wine-cup unbalances and dethrones one's better judgment, and leaves one the prey of all evil appetites that may choose to alight upon his soul. There is not a place of any kind of sin in the United States to-day that does not find its chief abettor in the chalice of inebriacy. There is either a drinking-bar before, or one behind, or one above, or one underneath. The officers of the law said to me that night: "These people escape legal penalty because they are all licensed to sell liquor." Then I said within myself, "The courts that license the sale of strong drink, license gambling-houses, license libertinism, license disease, license death, license all sufferings, all crimes, all despoliations, all disasters, all murders, all woe. It is the courts and the Legislature that are swinging wide open this grinding, creaky, stupendous gate of the lost."

But you say, "You have described these gates of hell and shown us how they swing in to allow the entrance of the doomed. Will you not, please, before you get through the sermon, tell us how these gates of hell may swing out to allow the escape of the penitent?" I reply, but very few escape. Of the thousand that go in nine hundred and ninety-nine perish. Suppose one of these wanderers should knock at your door, would you admit her? Suppose you knew where she came from, would you ask her to sit down at your dining-table? Would you ask her to become the governess of your children? Would you introduce her among your acquaintanceships? Would you take the responsibility of pulling on the outside of the gate of hell while she pushed on the inside of that gate trying to get out? You would not, not one of a thousand of you that would dare to do it. You write beautiful poetry over her sorrows and weep over her misfortunes, but give her practical help you never will. There is not one person out of a thousand that will—there is not one out of five thousand that has—come so near the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ as to dare to help one of these fallen souls. But you say, "Are there no ways by which the wanderer may escape?" Oh, yes; three or four. The one way is the sewing-girl's garret, dingy, cold, hunger-blasted. But you say, "Is there no other way for her to escape?" Oh, yes. Another way is the street that leads to the East river, at midnight, the end of the city dock, the moon shining down on the water making it look so smooth she wonders if it is deep enough. It is. No boatman near enough to hear the plunge. No watchman near enough to pick her out before she sinks the third time. No other way? Yes. By the curve of the Hudson River Railroad at the point where the engineer of the lightning express train cannot see a hundred yards ahead to the form that lies across the track. He may whistle "down brakes," but not soon enough to disappoint the one who seeks her death. But you say, "Isn't God good, and won't he forgive?" Yes; but man will not, woman will not, society will not. The church of God says it will, but it will not. Our work, then, must be prevention rather than cure. Standing here telling this story to-day, it is not so much in the hope that I will persuade one who has dashed down a thousand feet over the rocks to crawl up again into life and light, but it is to alarm those who are coming too near the edges. Have you ever listened to hear the lamentation that rings up from those far depths?

"Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell,
Fell like a snowflake, from heaven to hell;
Fell, to be trampled as filth of the street;
Fell, to be scoffed at, be spit on, and beat.
Pleading, cursing, begging to die,
Selling my soul to whoever would buy;
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living and fearing the dead."

But you say. "What can be the practical use of this course of sermons?" I say, much everywhere. I am greatly obliged to those gentlemen of the press who have fairly reported what I have said on these occasions, and the press of this city and New York, and of the other prominent cities. I thank you for the almost universal fairness with which you have presented what I have had to say. Of course, among the educated and refined journalists who sit at these tables, and have been sitting here for four or five years, there will be a fool or two that does not understand his business, but that ought not to discredit the grand newspaper printing-press. I thank also, those who have by letters cheered me in this work—letters coming from all parts of the land, from Christian reformers telling me to go on in the work which I have undertaken. Never so many letters in my life have I received. Perhaps one out of the hundred condemnatory, as one I got yesterday from a man who said he thought my sermons would do great damage in the fact that they would arouse the suspicion of domestic circles as to where the head of the family was spending his evenings! I was sorry it was an anonymous letter, for I should have written to that man's wife telling her to put a detective on her husband's track, for I knew right away he was going to bad places! My friends, you say, "It is not possible to do anything with these stalwart iniquities; you cannot wrestle them down." Stupid man, read my text: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church." Those gates of hell are to be prostrated just as certainly as God and the Bible are true, but it will not be done until Christian men and women, quitting their prudery and squeamishness in this matter, rally the whole Christian sentiment of the church and assail these great evils of society. The Bible utters its denunciation in this direction again and again, and yet the piety of the day is such a namby-pamby, emetic sort of a thing that you cannot even quote Scripture without making somebody restless. As long as this holy imbecility reigns in the church of God, sin will laugh you to scorn. I do not know but that before the church wakes up matters will get worse and worse, and that there will have to be one lamb sacrificed from each of the most carefully-guarded folds, and the wave of uncleanness dash to the spire of the village church and the top of the cathedral pillar. Prophets and patriarchs, and apostles and evangelists, and Christ himself have thundered against these sins as against no other, and yet there are those who think we ought to take, when we speak of these subjects, a tone apologetic. I put my foot on all the conventional rhetoric on this subject, and I tell you plainly that unless you give up that sin your doom is sealed, and world without end you will be chased by the anathemas of an incensed God. I rally you under the cheerful prophecy of the text; I rally you to a besiegement of the gates of hell. We want in this besieging host no soft sentimentalists, but men who are willing to give and take hard knocks. The gates of Gaza were carried off, the gates of Thebes were battered down, the gates of Babylon were destroyed, and the gates of hell are going to be prostrated. The Christianized printing-press will be rolled up as the chief battering-ram. Then there will be a long list of aroused pulpits, which shall be assailing fortresses, and God's red-hot truth shall be the flying ammunition of the contest; and the sappers and the miners will lay the train under these foundations of sin, and at just the right time God, who leads on the fray, will cry, "Down with the gates!" and the explosion beneath will be answered by all the trumpets of God on high celebrating universal victory. But there may be in this house one wanderer that would like to have a kind word calling homeward, and I cannot sit down until I have uttered that word. I have told you that society has no mercy. Did I hint, at an earlier point in this subject, that God will have mercy upon any wanderer who would like to come back to the heart of infinite love?

A cold Christmas night in a farm-house. Father comes in from the barn, knocks the snow from his shoes, and sits down by the fire. The mother sits at the stand knitting. She says to him: "Do you remember it is anniversary to-night?" The father is angered. He never wants any allusion to the fact that one had gone away, and the mere suggestion that it was the anniversary of that sad event made him quite rough, although the tears ran down his cheeks. The old house-dog, that had played with the wanderer when she was a child, came up and put his head on the old man's knee, but he roughly repulsed the dog. He wants nothing to remind him of the anniversary day. The following incident was told me. It was a cold winter night in a city church. It is Christmas night. They have been decorating the sanctuary. A lost wanderer of the street, with thin shawl about her, attracted by the warmth and light, comes in and sits near the door. The minister of religion is preaching of Him who was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities, and the poor soul by the door said: "Why, that must mean me; 'mercy for the chief of sinners; bruised for our iniquities; wounded for our transgressions.'" The music that night in the sanctuary brought back the old hymn which she used to sing when with father and mother she worshiped God in the village church. The service over, the minister went down the aisle. She said to him: "Were those words for me? 'Wounded for our transgressions.' Was that for me?" The man of God understood her not. He knew not how to comfort a shipwrecked soul, and he passed on and he passed out. The poor wanderer followed into the street. "What are you doing here, Meg?" said the police. "What are you doing here to-night?" "Oh!" she replied, "I was in to warm myself;" and then the rattling cough came, and she held to the railing until the paroxysm was over. She passed on down the street, falling from exhaustion; recovering herself again, until after a while she reached the outskirts of the city and passed on into the country road. It seemed so familiar, she kept on the road, and she saw in the distance a light in the window. Ah! that light had been gleaming there every night since she went away. On that country road she passed until she came to the garden gate. She opened it and passed up the path where she played in childhood. She came to the steps and looked in at the fire on the hearth. Then she put her fingers to the latch. Oh! if that door had been locked she would have perished on the threshold, for she was near to death. But that door had not been locked since the time she went away. She pushed open the door. She went in and laid down on the hearth by the fire. The old house-dog growled as he saw her enter, but there was something in the voice he recognized, and he frisked about her until he almost pushed her down in his joy. In the morning the mother came down, and she saw a bundle of rags on the hearth; but when the face was uplifted, she knew it, and it was no more old Meg of the street. Throwing her arms around the returned prodigal, she cried, "Oh! Maggie." The child threw her arms around her mother's neck, and said: "Oh! Mother," and while they were embraced a rugged form towered above them. It was the father. The severity all gone out of his face, he stooped and took her up tenderly and carried her to mother's room, and laid her down on mother's bed, for she was dying. Then the lost one, looking up into her mother's face, said: "'Wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities!" Mother, do you think that means me?" "Oh, yes, my darling," said the mother, "if mother is so glad to get you back, don't you think God is glad to get you back?" And there she lay dying, and all her dreams and all her prayers were filled with the words, "Wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," until just before the moment of her departure, her face lighted up, showing the pardon of God had dropped upon her soul. And there she slept away on the bosom of a pardoning Jesus. So the Lord took back one whom the world rejected.

CHAPTER IV.

WHOM I SAW AND WHOM I MISSED.

"And the vale of Siddim was full of slime-pits."—Genesis xiv: 10.

About six months ago, a gentleman in Augusta, Georgia, wrote me asking me to preach from this text, and the time has come for the subject. The neck of an army had been broken by falling into these half-hidden slime-pits. How deep they were, or how vile, or how hard to get out of, we are not told; but the whole scene is so far distant in the past that we have not half as much interest in this statement of the text as we have in the announcement that our American cities are full of slime-pits, and tens of thousands of people are falling in them night by night. Recently, in the name of God, I explored some of these slime-pits. Why did I do so? In April last, seated in the editorial rooms of one of the chief daily newspapers of New York, the editor said to me: "Mr. Talmage, you clergymen are at great disadvantage when you come to battle iniquity, for you don't know what you are talking about, and we laymen are aware of the fact that you don't know of what you are talking; now, if you would like to make a personal investigation, I will see that you shall get the highest official escort." I thanked him, accepted the invitation, and told him that this autumn I would begin the tour. The fact was that I had for a long time wanted to say some words of warning and invitation to the young men of this country, and I felt if my course of sermons was preceded by a tour of this sort I should not only be better acquainted with the subject, but I should have the whole country for an audience; and it has been a deliberate plan of my ministry, whenever I am going to try to do anything especial for God, or humanity, or the church, to do it in such a way that the devil will always advertise it free gratis for nothing! That was the reason I gave two weeks' previous notice of my pulpit intentions. The result has been satisfactory.

Standing within those purlieus of death, under the command of the police and in their company, I was as much surprised at the people whom I missed as at the people whom I saw. I saw bankers there, and brokers there, and merchants there, and men of all classes and occupations who have leisure, there; but there was one class of persons that I missed. I looked for them all up and down the galleries, and amid the illumined gardens, and all up and down the staircases of death. I saw not one of them. I mean the hard-working classes, the laboring classes, of our great cities. You tell me they could not afford to go there. They could. Entrance, twenty-five cents. They could have gone there if they had a mind to; but the simple fact is that hard work is a friend to good morals. The men who toil from early morn until late at night when they go home are tired out, and want to sit down and rest, or to saunter out with their families along the street, or to pass into some quiet place of amusement where they will not be ashamed to take wife or daughter. The busy populations of these cities are the moral populations. I observed on the night of our exploration that the places of dissipation are chiefly supported by the men who go to business at 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning and get through at 3 and 4 in the afternoon. They have plenty of time to go to destruction in and plenty of money to buy a through ticket on the Grand Trunk Railroad to perdition, stopping at no depot until they get to the eternal smash-up! Those are the fortunate and divinely-blessed young men who have to breakfast early and take supper late, and have the entire interregnum filled up with work that blisters the hands, and makes the legs ache and the brain weary. There is no chance for the morals of that young man who has plenty of money and no occupation. You may go from Central Park to the Battery, or you may go from Fulton Street Ferry, Brooklyn, out to South Bushwick, or out to Hunter's Point, or out to Gowanus, and you will not find one young man of that kind who has not already achieved his ruin, or who is not on the way thereto at the rate of sixty miles the hour. Those are not the favored and divinely-blessed young men who come and go as they will, and who have their pocket-case full of the best cigars, and who dine at Delmonico's, and who dress in the tip-top of fashion, their garments a little tighter or looser or broader striped than others, their mustaches twisted with stiffer cosmetic, and their hair redolent with costly pomatum, and have their hat set farthest over on the right ear, and who have boots fitting the foot with exquisite torture, and who have handkerchief soaked with musk, and patchouli, and white rose, and new-mown hay, and "balm of a thousand flowers;" but those are the fortunate young men who have to work hard for a living. Give a young man plenty of wines, and plenty of cigars, and plenty of fine horses, and Satan has no anxiety about that man's coming out at his place. He ceases to watch him, only giving directions about his reception when he shall arrive at the end of the journey. If, on the night of our exploration, I had called the roll of all the laboring men of these cities, I would have received no answer, for the simple reason they were not there to answer. I was not more surprised at the people whom I saw there than I was surprised at the people whom I missed. Oh! man, if you have an occupation by which you are wearied every night of your life, thank God, for it is the mightiest preservative against evil.

But by that time the clock of old Trinity Church was striking one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve—midnight! And with the police and two elders of my church we sat down at the table in the galleries and looked off upon the vortex of death. The music in full blast; the dance in wildest whirl; the wine foaming to the lip of the glass. Midnight on earth is midnoon in hell. All the demons of the pit were at that moment holding high carnival. The blue calcium light suggested the burning brimstone of the pit. Seated there, at that hour, in that awful place, you ask me, as I have frequently been asked, "What were the emotions that went through your heart?" And I shall give the rest of my morning's sermon to telling you how I felt.

First of all, as at no death-bed or railroad disaster did I feel an overwhelming sense of pity. Why were we there as Christian explorers, while those lost souls were there as participators? If they had enjoyed the same healthful and Christian surroundings which we have had all our days, and we had been thrown amid the contaminations which have destroyed them, the case would have been the reverse, and they would have been the spectators and we the actors in that awful tragedy of the damned. As I sat there I could not keep back the tears—tears of gratitude to God for his protecting grace—tears of compassion for those who had fallen so low. The difference in moral navigation had been the difference in the way the wind blew. The wind of temptation drove them on the rocks. The wind of God's mercy drove us out on a fair sea. There are men and women so merciless in their criticism of the fallen that you might think that God had made them in an especial mold, and that they have no capacity for evil, and yet if they had been subjected to the same allurements, instead of stopping at the up-town haunts of iniquity, they would at this hour have been wallowing amid the horrors of Arch Block, or shrieking with delirium tremens in the cell of a police station. Instead of boasting over your purity and your integrity and your sobriety, you had better be thanking God for his grace, lest some time the Lord should let you loose and you find out how much better you are than others naturally. I will take the best-tempered man in this house, the most honest man in this city, and I will venture the opinion in regard to him that, surround him with all the adequate circumstances of temptation, and the Lord let him loose, he would become a thief, a gambler, a sot, a rake, a wharf-rat. Instead of boasting over our superiority, and over the fact that there is no capacity in us of evil, I would rather have for my epitaph that one word which Duncan Matthewson, the Scotch evangelist, ordered chiseled on his tombstone, the name, and the one word, "Kept."

Again: Seated in that gallery of death, and looking out on that maelstrom of iniquity, I thought to myself, "There! that young man was once the pride of the city home. Paternal care watched him; maternal love bent over him; sisterly affection surrounded him. He was once taken to the altar and consecrated in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; but he went away. This very moment," I thought to myself, "there are hearts aching for that young man's return. Father and mother are sitting up for him." You say, "He has a night-key, and he can get in without their help. Why do not those parents go sound to sleep?" What! Is there any sleep for parents who suspect a son is drifting up and down amid the dissipations of a great city? They may weep, they may pray, they may wring their hands, but sleep they cannot. Ah! they have done and suffered too much for that boy to give him up now. They turn up the light and look at the photograph of him when he was young and untempted. They stand at the window to see if he is coming up the street. They hear the watchman's rattle, but no sound of returning boy. I felt that night as if I could put my hand on the shoulder of that young man, and, with a voice that would sound all through those temples of sin, say to him, "Go home, young man; your father is waiting for you. Your mother is waiting for you. God is waiting for you. All heaven is waiting for you. Go home! By the tears wept over your waywardness, by the prayers offered for your salvation, by the midnight watching over you when you had scarlet fever and diphtheria, by the blood of the Son of God, by the judgment day when you must give answer for what you have been doing here to-night, go home!" But I did not say this, lest it interfere with my work, and I waited to get on this platform, where, perhaps, instead of saving one young man, God helping me, I might save a thousand young men; and the cry of alarm which I suppressed that night, I let loose to-day in the hearing of this people.

Seated in that gallery of death, and looking off upon the destruction, I bethought myself also, "These are the fragments of broken homes." A home is a complete thing, and if one member of it wander off, then the home is broken. And sitting there, I said: "Here they

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are, broken family altars, broken wedding-rings, broken vows, broken anticipations, broken hearts." And, as I looked off, the dance became wilder and more unrestrained, until it seemed as if the floor broke through and the revelers were plunged into a depth from which they may never rise, and all these broken families came around the brink and seemed to cry out: "Come back, father! Come back, mother! Come back, my son! Come back, my daughter! Come back, my sister!" But no voices returned, and the sound of the feet of the dancers grew fainter and fainter, and stopped, and there was thick darkness. And I said, "What does all this mean?" And there came up a great hiss of whispering voices, saying, "This is the second death!"

But seated there that night, looking off upon that scene of death, I bethought myself also, "This is only a miserable copy of European dissipations." In London they have what they call the Argyle, the Cremorne, the Strand, the beer-gardens, and a thousand places of infamy, and it seems to be the ambition of bad people in this country to copy those foreign dissipations. Toadyism when it bows to foreign pretense and to foreign equipage and to foreign title is despicable; but toadyism is more despicable when it bows to foreign vice. Why, you might as well steal the pillow-case of a small-pox hospital, or the shovels of a scavenger's cart, or the coffin of a leper, as to make theft of these foreign plagues. If you want to destroy the people, have some originality of destruction; have an American trap to catch the bodies and souls of men, instead of infringing on the patented inventions of European iniquity.

Seated there that night, I also felt that if the good people of our cities knew what was going on in these haunts of iniquity, they would endure it no longer.

The foundations of city life are rotten with iniquity, and if the foundations give way the whole structure must crumble. If iniquity progresses in the next one hundred years in the same ratio that it has progressed in the century now closed, there will not be a vestige of moral or religious influence left. It is only a question of subtraction and addition. If the people knew how the virus is spreading they would stop it. I think the time has come for action. I wish that the next Mayor of New York whether he be Augustus Schell or Edward Cooper, may rise up to the height of this position. Revolution is what we want, and that revolution would begin to-morrow if the moral and Christian people of our cities knew of the fires that slumber beneath them. Once in a while a glorious city missionary or reformer like Mr. Brace or Mr. Van Meter tells to a well-dressed audience in church the troubles that lie under our roaring metropolis, and the conventional church-goer gives his five dollars for bread, or gives his fifty dollars to help support a ragged school, and then goes home feeling that the work is done. Oh! my friends, the work will not be accomplished until by the force of public opinion the officers of the law shall be compelled to execute the law. We are told that the twenty-five hundred police of New York cannot put down the five or six hundred dens of infamy, to say nothing of the gambling-houses and the unlicensed grog-shops. I reply, swear me in as a special police and give me two hundred police for two nights, and I would break up all the leading haunts of iniquity in these two cities, and arrest all their leaders and send such consternation in the smaller places that they would shut up of themselves! I do not think I should be afraid of law-suits for damages for false imprisonment. What we want in these cities is a Stonewall Jackson's raid through all the places of iniquity. I was persuaded by what I saw on that night of my exploration that the keepers of all these haunts of iniquity are as afraid as they are of death of the police star, and the police club, and the police revolver. Hence, I declare that the existence of these abominations are to be charged either to police cowardice or to police complicity.

At the close of our journey that night, we got in the carriage, and we came out on Broadway, and as we came down the street everything seemed silent save the clattering hoofs and the wheels of our own conveyance. Looking down the long line of gaslights, the pavement seemed very solitary. The great sea of metropolitan life had ebbed, leaving a dry beach! New York asleep! No! no! Burglary wide awake. Libertinism wide awake. Murder wide awake. Ten thousand city iniquities wide awake. The click of the decanters in the worst hours of the debauch. The harvest of death full. Eternal woe the reaper.

What is that? Trinity clock striking, one—two. "Good night," said the officers of the law, and I responded "good night," for they had been very kind, and very generous and very helpful to us. "Good night." And yet, was there ever an adjective more misapplied? Good night! Why, there was no expletive enough scarred and blasted to describe that night. Black night. Forsaken night. Night of man's wickedness and woman's overthrow. Night of awful neglect on the part of those who might help but do not. For many of those whom we had been watching, everlasting night. No hope. No rescue. No God. Black night of darkness forever. As far off as hell is from heaven was that night distant from being a good night. Oh, my friends, what are you going to do in this matter? Punish the people? That is not my theory. Prevent the people, warn the people, hinder the people before they go down. The first philanthropist this country ever knew was Edward Livingston, and he wrote these remarkable words in 1833:

> "As prevention in the diseases of the body is less painful, less expensive, and more efficacious than the most skillful cure, so in the moral maladies of society, to arrest the vicious before the profligacy assumes the shape of crime, to take away from the poor the cause or pretense of relieving themselves by fraud or theft, to reform them by education, and make their own industry contribute to their support, although difficult and expensive, will be found more effectual inthe suppression of offenses, and more economical, than the best organized system of punishment."

Next Sabbath morning I shall tell you of my second night of exploration. I have only opened the door of this great subject with which I hope to stir the cities. I have begun, and, God helping me, I will go through. Whoever else may be crowded or kept standing, or kept outside the doors, I charge the trustees and the ushers of this church that they give full elbow-room to all these journalists, since each one is another church five times, or ten times, or twenty times larger than this august assemblage, and it is by the printing-press that the Gospel of the Son of God is to be yet preached to all the world. May the blessing of the Lord God come down upon all the editors, and all the reporters, and all the compositors, and all the proof-readers, and all the typesetters!

But, my friends, before the iniquities of our cities are closed, my tongue may be silent in death, and many who are here this morning may have gone so far in sin they cannot get back. You have sometimes been walking on the banks of a river, and you have seen a man struggling in the water, and you have thrown off your coat and leaped in for the rescue. So this morning I throw off the robe of pulpit conventionality, and I plunge in for your drowning soul. I have no cross words for you. I have only cross words for those who would destroy you. I am glad God has not put in my hand any one of the thunderbolts of His power, lest I might be tempted to hurl it at those who are plotting your ruin. I do not give you the tip end of the long fingers of the left hand, but I take your hand, hot with the fever of indulgences and trembling with last night's debauch, into both my hands, and give the heartiest grip of invitation and welcome. "Oh," you say, "you would not shake hands with me if you met me." I would. Try me at the foot of this platform and see if I will not. I have sometimes said that I would like to die with my hand in the hand of my family and my kindred; but I revoke that wish this morning and say I would like to die with my hand in the hand of a returning sinner, when, with God's help, I am trying to pull him up into the glorious liberty of the Gospel. I would like that to be my last work on earth. Oh! my brother, come back! Do you know that God made Richard Baxters and John Bunyans and Robert Newtons out of such as you are? Come back! and wash in the deep fountain of a Savior's mercy. I do not give you a cup, or a chalice, or a pitcher with a limited supply to effect your ablutions. I point you to the five oceans of God's mercy. Oh! that the Atlantic and Pacific surges of divine forgiveness might roll over your soul. I do not say to you, as we said to the officers of the law when we left them on Broadway, "Good night." Oh, no. But, as the glorious sun of God's forgiveness rides on toward the mid heavens, ready to submerge you in warmth and light and love, I bid you good morning! Morning of peace for all your troubles. Morning of liberation for all your incarcerations. Morning of resurrection for your soul buried in sin. Good morning! Morning for the resuscitated household that has been waiting for your return. Morning for the cradle and the crib already disgraced with being that of a drunkard's child. Morning for the daughter that has trudged off to hard work because you did not take care of home. Morning for the wife who at forty or fifty years has the wrinkled face, and the stooped shoulder, and the white hair. Morning for one. Morning for all. Good morning! In God's name, good morning.

In our last dreadful war the Federals and the Confederates were encamped on opposite sides of the Rappahannock, and one morning the brass band of the Northern troops played the national air, and all the Northern troops cheered and cheered. Then on the opposite side of the Rappahannock the brass band of the Confederates played "My Maryland" and "Dixie," and then all the Southern troops cheered and cheered. But after awhile one of the bands struck up "Home, Sweet Home," and the band on the opposite side of the river took up the strain, and when the tune was done the Confederates and the Federals all together united, as the tears rolled down their cheeks, in one great huzza! huzza! Well, my friends, heaven comes very near to-day. It is only a stream that divides us—the narrow stream of death—and the voices there and the voices here seem to commingle, and we join trumpets, and hosannahs, and hallelujahs, and the chorus of the united song of earth and heaven is, "Home, Sweet Home." Home of bright domestic circle on earth. Home of forgiveness in the great heart of God. Home of eternal rest in heaven. Home! Home! Home!

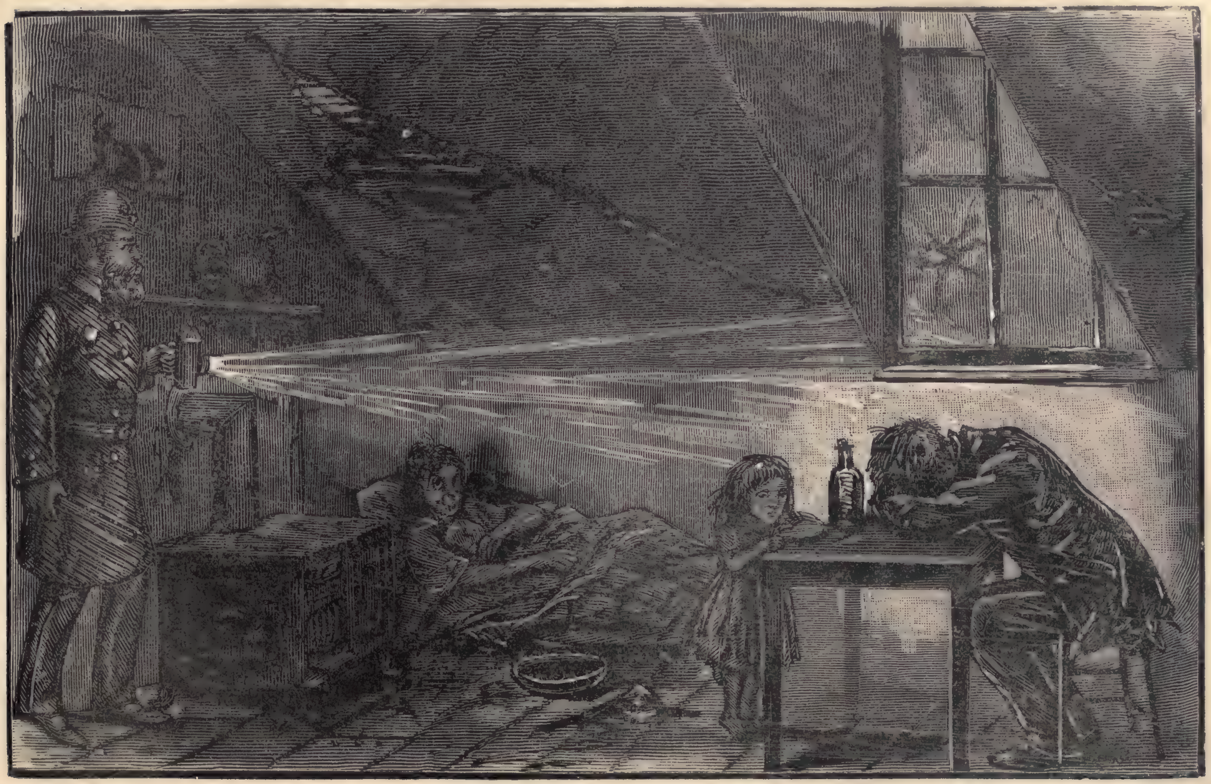
CHAPTER V.

UNDER THE POLICE LANTERN.

The destruction of the poor is their poverty.—Proverbs x: 15.

On an island nine miles long by two and a half wide stands the largest city on this continent—a city mightiest for virtue and for vice. Before I get through with this series of Sabbath morning discourses, I shall show you the midnoon of its magnificent progress and philanthropy, as well as the midnight of its crime and sin. Twice in every twenty-four hours our City Hall and old Trinity clocks strike twelve—once while business and art are in full blast, and once while iniquity is doing its uttermost. Both stories must be told. It is pleasanter to put on a plaster than to thrust in a probe; but it is absurd to propose remedies for disease until we have taken a diagnosis of that disease. The patient may squirm and cringe, and fight back, and resist; but the surgeon must go on. Before I get through with these Sabbath morning sermons, I shall make you all smile at the beautiful things I will say about the grandeur and beneficence of this cluster of cities; but my work now is excavation and exposure. I have as much amusement as any man of my profession can afford to indulge in at any one time, in seeing some of the clerical "reformers" of this day mount their war-charger, dig in their spurs, and with glittering lance dash down upon the iniquities of cities that have been three or four thousand years dead. These men will corner an old sinner of twenty or thirty centuries ago, and scalp him, and hang him, and cut him to pieces, and then say: "Oh! what great things have been done." With amazing prowess, they throw sulphur at Sodom, and fire at Gomorrah, and worms at Herod, and pitch Jezebel over the wall, but wipe off their gold spectacles, and put on their best kid gloves, and unroll their morocco-covered sermon, and look bashful when they begin to speak about the sins of our day, as though it were a shame even to mention them. The hypocrites! They are afraid of the libertines and the men who drink too much, in their churches, and those who grind the face of the poor. Better, I say, clear out all our audiences from pulpit to storm-door, until no one is left but the sexton, and he staying merely to lock up, than to have the pulpit afraid of the pew. The time has come when the living Judases and Herods and Jezebels are to be arraigned. There is one thing I like about a big church; a dozen people may get mad about the truth and go off, and you don't know they are gone until about the next year. The cities standing on the ground are the cities to be reformed, and not the Herculaneums buried under volcanic ashes, or the cities of the plain fifty feet under the Dead Sea.

I unroll the scroll of new revelations. With city missionary, and the police of New York and Brooklyn, I have seen some things that I have not yet stated in this series of discourses on the night side of city life. The night of which I speak now is darker than any other. No glittering chandelier, no blazing mirror adorns it. It is the long, deep exhaustive night of city pauperism. "We won't want a carriage to-night," said the detectives. "A carriage would hinder us in our work; a carriage going through the streets where we are going would only bring out the people to see what was the matter." So on foot we went up the dark lanes of poverty. Everything



A WRETCHED HOME.

revolting to eye, and ear, and nostril. Population unwashed, uncombed. Rooms unventilated. Three midnights overlapping each other—midnight of the natural world, midnight of crime, midnight of pauperism. Stairs oozing with filth. The inmates, nine-tenths of the journey to their final doom, traveled. They started in some unhappy home of the city or of the country. They plunged into the shambles of death within ten minutes' walk of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, and then came on gradually down until they have arrived at the Fourth Ward. When they move out of the Fourth Ward they will move into Bellevue Hospital; when they move out of Bellevue Hospital they will move to Blackwell's Island; when they move from Blackwell's Island they will move to the Potter's Field; when they move from the Potter's Field they will move into hell! Bellevue Hospital and Blackwell's Island take care of 18,000 patients in one year. As we passed on, the rain pattering on the street and dripping around the doorways made the night more dismal. I said, "Now let the police go ahead," and they flashed their light, and there were fourteen persons trying to sleep, or sleeping, in one room. Some on a bundle of straw; more with nothing under them and nothing over them. "Oh!" you say, "this is exceptional." It is not. Thousands lodge in that way. One hundred and seventy thousand families living in tenement houses, in more or less inconvenience, more or less squalor. Half a million people in New York city—five hundred thousand people living in tenement-houses; multitudes of these people dying by inches. Of the twenty-four thousand that die yearly in New York fourteen thousand die in tenement-houses. No lungs that God ever made could for a long while stand the atmosphere we breathed for a little while. In the Fourth

Ward, 17,000 people within the space of thirty acres. You say, "Why not clear them out? Why not, as at Liverpool, where 20,000 of these people were cleared out of the city, and the city saved from a moral pestilence, and the people themselves from being victimized?" There will be no reformation for these cities until the tenement-house system is entirely broken up. The city authorities will have to buy farms, and will have to put these people on those farms, and compel them to work. By the strong arm of the law, by the police lantern conjoined with Christian charity, these places must be exposed and must be uprooted. Those places in London which have become historical for crowded populations—St. Giles, Whitechapel, Holborn, the Strand—have their match at last in the Sixth Ward, Eleventh Ward, Fourteenth Ward, Seventeenth Ward of New York. No purification for our cities until each family shall have something of the privacy and seclusion of a home circle. As long as they herd like beasts, they will be beasts.

Hark! What is that heavy thud on the wet pavement? Why, that is a drunkard who has fallen, his head striking against the street—striking very hard. The police try to lift him up. Ring the bell for the city ambulance. No. Only an outcast, only a tatterdemalion—a heap of sores and rags. But look again. Perhaps he has some marks of manhood on his face; perhaps he may have been made in the image of God; perhaps he has a soul which will live after the dripping heavens of this dismal night have been rolled together as a scroll; perhaps he may have been died for, by a king; perhaps he may yet be a conqueror charioted in the splendors of heavenly welcome. But we must pass on. We cross the street, and, the rain beating in his face, lies a man entirely unconscious. I wonder where he came from. I wonder if any one is waiting for him. I wonder if he was ever rocked in a Christian cradle. I wonder if that gashed and bloated forehead was ever kissed by a fond mother's lips. I wonder if he is stranded for eternity. But we cannot stop. We passed on down, the air loaded with blasphemies and obscenities, until I heard something that astounded me more than all. I said, "What is that?" It was a loud, enthusiastic Christian song, rolling out on the stormy air. I went up to the window and looked in. There was a room filled with all sorts of people, some standing, some kneeling, some sitting, some singing, some praying, some shaking hands as if to give encouragement, some wringing their hands as though over a wasted life. What was this? Oh! it was Jerry McAuley's glorious Christian mission. There he stood, himself snatched from death, snatching others from death. That scene paid for all the nausea and fatigue of the midnight exploration. Our tears fell with the rain—tears of sympathy for a good man's work; tears of gratitude to God that one lifeboat had been launched on that wild sea of sin and death; tears of hope that there might be lifeboats enough to take off all the wrecked, and, that, after a while, the Church of God, rousing from its fastidiousness, might lay hold with both hands of this work, which must be done if our cities are not to go down in darkness and fire and blood.

This cluster of cities have more difficulty than any other cities in all the land. You must understand that within the last twenty-eight years five millions of foreign population have arrived at our port. The most of those who had capital and means passed on to the greater openings at the West. Many however, stayed and have become our best citizens, and best members of our churches; but we know also that, tarrying within our borders, there has been a vast criminal population ready to be manipulated by the demagogue, ready to hatch out all kinds of criminal desperation. The vagrancy and the beggary of our cities, augmented by the very worst populations of London and Edinburg, and Glasgow, and Berlin, and Belfast, and Dublin and Cork. We had enough vagabondage, and enough turpitude in our American cities before this importation of sin was dumped at Castle Garden. Oh! this pauperism, when will it ever be alleviated? How much we saw! How much we could not see! How much none but the eye of Almighty God will ever see! Flash the lantern of the police around to that station-house. There they come up, the poor creatures, tipping their torn hats, saying, "Night's lodging, sir?" And then they are waived away into the dormitories. One hundred and forty thousand such lodgers in the city of New York every year. The atmosphere unbearable. What pathos in the fact that many families turned out of doors because they cannot pay their rent, come in here for shelter, and after struggling for decency, and struggling for a good name, are flung into this loathsome pool. The respectable and the reprobate. Innocent childhood and vicious old age. The Lord's poor and Satan's desperadoes. There is no report of almshouse and missionary that will ever tell the story of New York and Brooklyn pauperism. It will take a larger book, a book with more ponderous lids, a book made of paper other than that of earthly manufacture. The book of God's remembrance! At my basement door we average between fifty and one hundred calls every day for help. Beside that, in my reception room, from 7 o'clock in the morning until 10 o'clock at night, there is a continuous procession of people applying for aid, making a demand which an old-fashioned silken purse, caught at the middle with a ring, the wealth of Vanderbilt in one end and the wealth of William B. Astor in the other end, could not satisfy. Of course, I speak of those men's wealth while they lived. We have more money now than they have since they have their shroud on. But even the shroud and the grave, we find, are to be contested for. Cursed be the midnight jackals of St. Mark's Churchyard! But I must go on with the fact that the story of Brooklyn and New York pauperism needs to be written in ink, black, blue and red—blue for the stripes, red for the blood, black for the infamy. In this cluster of cities 20,000 people supported by the bureau for the outdoor sick; 20,000 people taken care of by the city hospitals; 70,000 provided for by private charity; 80,000 taken care of by reformatory institutions and prisons. Hear it, ye churches, and pour out your benefaction. Hear it, you ministers of religion, and utter words of sympathy for the suffering, and thunders of indignation against the cause of all this wretchedness. Hear it, mayoralties and judicial bench, and constabularies. Unless we wake up, the Lord will scourge us as the yellow fever never scourged New Orleans, as the plague never smote London, as the earthquake never shook Carraccas, as the fire never overwhelmed Sodom. I wish I could throw a bombshell of arousal into every city hall, meeting-house and cathedral on the continent. The factories at Fall River and at Lowell sometimes stop for lack of demand, and for lack of workmen, but this million-roomed factory of sin and death never stops, never slackens a band, never arrests a spindle. The great wheel of that factory keeps on turning, not by such floods as those of the Merrimac or the Connecticut, but crimson floods rushing forth from the groggeries, and the wine-cellars, and the drinking saloons of the land, and the faster the floods rush the faster the wheel turns; and the band of that wheel is woven from broken heart-strings, and every time the wheel turns, from the mouth of the mill come forth blasted estates, squalor, vagrancy, crime, sin, woe—individual woe, municipal woe, national woe—and the creaking and the rumbling of the wheels are the shrieks and the groans of men and women lost for two worlds, and the cry is, "Bring on more fortunes, more homes, more States, more cities, to make up the awful grist of this stupendous mill." "Oh," you say, "the wretchedness and the sin of the city will go out from lack of material after awhile." No, it will not. The police lantern flashes in another direction. Here come 15,000 shoeless, hatless, homeless children of the street, in this cluster of cities. They are the reserve corps of this great army of wretchedness and crime that are dropping down into the Morgue, the East river, the Potter's Field, the prison. A philanthropist has estimated that if these children were placed in a great procession, double-file, three feet apart, they would make a procession eleven miles long. Oh! what a pale, coughing, hunger-bitten, sin-cursed, opthalmic throng—the tigers, the adders, the scorpions ready to bite and sting society, which they take to be their natural enemy. Howard Mission has saved many. Children's Aid Society has saved many. Industrial Schools have saved many. One of these societies transported 30,000 children from the streets of our cities, to farms at the West, by a stratagem of charity, turning them from vagrancy into useful citizenship, and out of 21,000 children thus transported from the cities to farms only twelve turned out badly. But still the reserve corps of sin and wretchedness marches on. There is the regiment of boot-blacks. They seem jolly, but they have more sorrow than many an old man has had. All kinds of temptation. Working on, making two or three dollars a week. At fifteen years of age sixty years old in sin. Pitching pennies at the street corners. Smoking fragments of castaway cigars. Tempted by the gamblers. Destroyed by the top gallery in the low play house. Blacking shoes their regular business. Between times blackening their morals. "Shine your boots, sir?" they call out with merry voices, but there is a tremor in their accentuation. Who cares for them? You put your foot thoughtlessly on their stand, and you whistled or smoked, when God knows you might have given them one kind word. They never had one. Whoever prayed for a bootblack? Who, finding the wind blowing under the short jacket, or reddening his bare neck, ever asked him to warm? Who, when he is wronged out of his ten cents, demands justice for him? God have mercy on the bootblacks. The newsboys, another regiment—the smartest boys in all the city. At work at four o'clock in the morning. At half-past three, by unnatural vigilance, awake themselves, or pulled at by rough hands. In the dawn of the day standing before the folding-rooms of the great newspapers, taking the wet, damp sheets over their arms, and against their chests already shivering with the cold. Around the bleak ferries, and up and down the streets on the cold days, singing as merrily as though it were a Christmas carol; making half a cent on each paper, some of them working fourteen hours for fifty cents! Nine thousand of these newsboys applied for aid at the Newsboys' Lodging-house on Park place, New York, in one year. About one thousand of them laid up in the savings bank connected with that institution, a little more than $3,000. But still this great army marches on, hungry, cold, sick, toward an early grave, or a quick prison. I tell you there is nothing that so moves my compassion as on a cold winter morning to see one of these newsboys, a fourth clad, newspapers on his arm that he cannot seem to sell, face or hands bleeding from a fall, or rubbing his knee to relieve it from having been hit on the side of a car, as some "gentleman," with furs around his neck and gauntlets lined with lamb's wool, shoved him off, saying: "You miserable rat!" Yet hawking the papers through the streets, papers full of railroad accidents and factory explosions, and steamers foundering at sea in the last storm, yet saying nothing, and that which is to him worse than all the other calamities and all the other disasters, the calamity that he was ever born at all. Flash the police lantern around, and let us see these poor lads cuddled up under the stairway. Look at them! Now for a little while they are unconscious of all their pains and aches, and of the storm and darkness, once in awhile struggling in their dreams as though some one were trying to take the papers away from them. Standing there I wondered if it would be right to wish that they might never wake up. God pity them! There are other regiments in this reserve corps—regiments of rag-pickers, regiments of match-sellers, regiments of juvenile vagrants. Oh! if these lads are not saved, what is to become of our cities?

But I said to the detective, "I have had enough of this to-night; let us go." But by that time I had lost the points of the compass, for we had gone down stairways and up stairways, and wandered down through this street and that street, and all I knew was that I was bounded on the north by want, and on the south by squalor, and on the east by crime, and on the west by despair. The fact was that everything had opened before us; for these detectives pretended to be searching for a thief, and they took me along as the man who had lost the property!

A HAPPY HOME.

The stratagem was theirs, not mine. But I thought coming home that rainy night, I wished I could make pass before my congregation, as in a panorama, all that scene of suffering, that I might stir their pity and arouse heir beneficence, and make them the everlasting friends of city evangelization. "Why," you say, "I had no idea things were so bad. Why, I get in my carriage at Forty-fifth street and I ride clear down to my banking-house in Wall street, and I don't see anything." No, you do not want to see! The King and the Parliament of England did not know that there were thirty-six barrels of gunpowder rolled into the vaults under the Parliament House. They did not know Guy Fawkes had his touchwood and matches all ready—ready to dash the Government of England into atoms. The conspiracy was revealed, however. I tell you I have explored the vaults of city life, and I am here this morning to tell you that there are deathful and explosive influences under all our cities, ready to destroy us with a great moral convulsion. Some men say: "I don't see anything of this, and I am not interested in it." You ought to be. You remind me of a man who has been shipwrecked with a thousand others. He happens to get up on the shore, and the others are all down in the surf. He goes up in a fisherman's cabin, and sits down to warm himself. The fisherman says: "Oh! this won't do. Come out and help me to get these others out of the surf." "Oh, no!" says the man; "it's my business now to warm myself." "But," says the fisherman, "these men are dying; are you not going to give them help?" "Oh, no! I've got ashore myself, and I must warm myself!" That is what people are doing in the church to-day. A great multitude are out in the surf of sin and death, going down forever; but men sit by the fire of the church, warming their Christian graces, warming their faith, warming their hope for heaven, and I say, "Come out, and work to-day for Christ." "Oh, no," they say; "my sublime duty is to warm myself!" Such men as that will not come within ten thousand miles of heaven! Help foreign missions. Those of my own blood are toiling in foreign lands with Christ's Word. Send a million dollars for the salvation of the heathen—that is right—but look after the heathen also around the mouths of the Hudson and East rivers. Send missionaries if you will to Borioboola-gha, but send missionaries also through Houston street, Mercer street, Greene street, Navy street, Fulton street, and all around about Brooklyn Atlantic Docks. If you will, send quilted coverlets to Central Africa to keep the natives warm in summer-time, and send ice-cream freezers to Greenland, but do have a little common sense and practical charity, and help these cities here that want hats, want clothes, want shoes, want fire, want medicines, want instruction, want the Gospel, want Christ.

I must adjourn to another Sabbath morning much of what I have to say in regard to this city midnight exploration, and also the proposing of remedies; for I am not the man to stand here Sabbath by Sabbath talking of ills when I have no panacea. There is an almighty rescue for the city, and in due time I will speak of these things.

You have seen often a magic lantern. You have seen the room darkened, and then the magic lantern throwing a picture on the canvas. Well, this morning I wish I could darken these three great emblazoned windows, and have all the doors darkened, and then I could bring out two magic lanterns—the magic lantern of the home, and the magic lantern of the police. Here is the magic lantern of the home. Look now upon the canvas. Mother putting the little children to bed, trying to hush the frisky and giggling group for the evening prayer; their foreheads against the counterpane, they are trying to say their evening prayer; their tongue is so crooked that none but God and the mother can understand it. Then the children are lifted into bed, and they are covered up to the chin. Then the mother gives them a warm good-night kiss, and leaves them to the guardian angels that spread wings of canopy over the trundle-bed. Midnight lantern of the police. Look now on the canvas. A boy kenneled for the night underneath the stairway in a hall through which the wind sweeps, or lying on the cold ground. He had no parentage. He was pitched into the world by a merciless incognito. He does not go to bed; he has no bed. His cold fingers thrust through his matted hair his only pillow. He did not sup last night; he will not breakfast to-morrow. An outcast; a ragamuffin. He did not say his prayers when he retired; he knows no prayer; he never heard the name of God or Christ, except as something to swear by. The wings over him, not the wings of angels, but the dark, bat-like wings of penury and want. Magic lantern of the home. Look now on the canvas. Family gathered around the argand burner. Father, feet on ottoman, mother sewing a picturesque pattern. Two children pretending to study, but chiefly watching other children who are in unrestrained romp, so many balls of fun and frolic in full bounce from room to room. Background of pictures and upholstery and musical instrument, from which jeweled fingers sweep "Home, Sweet Home." Magic lantern of the police. Look now on the canvas. A group intoxicated and wrangling, cursing God, cursing each other; the past all shame, the future all suffering. Children fleeing from the missile flung by a father's hand.

Fragments of a chair propped against the wall. Fragments of a pitcher standing on the mantle. A pile of refuse food brought in from some kitchen, torn by the human swine plunging into the trough. Magic lantern of the home. Look now upon the canvas. A Christian daughter has just died. Carriages rolling up to the door in sympathy. Flowers in crowns and anchors and harps covering the beautiful casket, the silver plate marked, "aged 18." Funeral services intoned amid the richly-shawled and gold-braceleted. Long procession going out this way to unparalleled Greenwood to the beautiful family plot where the sculptor will raise the monument of burnished Aberdeen with the inscription, "She is not dead, but sleepeth." Oh! blessed is that home which has a consecrated Christian daughter, whether on earth or in heaven. Magic lantern of the police. Look now on the canvas. A poor waif of the street has just expired. Did she have any doctor? No. Did she have any medicine? No. Did she have any hands to close her eyes and fold her arms in death? No. Are there no garments in the house fit to wrap her in for the tomb? None. Those worn-out shoes will not do for these feet in their last journey. Where are all the good Christians? Oh! some of them are rocking-chaired, in morning gowns, in tears over Bulwer Lytton's account of the last days of Pompeii; they are so sorry for that girl that got petrified! Others of the Christians are in church, kneeling on a soft rug, praying for the forlorn Hottentots! Come, call in the Coroner—call in the Charity Commissioner. The carpenter unrolls the measuring-tape, and decides she will need a box five and a half feet long. Two men lift her into the box, lift the box into the wagon, and it starts for the Potter's Field. The excavation is not large enough for the box, and the men are in a hurry, and one of them gets on the lid and cranches it down to its place in the ground. Stop! Wait for the city missionary until he can come and read a chapter, or say, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust." "No," say the men of the spade, "we have three or four more cases just like this to bury before night." "Well," I say, "how, then, is the grave to be filled up?" Christ suggests a way. Perhaps it had better be filled up with stones. "Let those who are without sin come and cast a stone at her," until the excavation is filled. Then the wagon rolls off, and I see a form coming slowly across the Potter's Field. He walks very slowly, as his feet hurt. He comes to that grave, and there he stands all day and all night, and I come out and I accost him, and I say, "Who art thou?" And he says, "I am the Christ of Mary Magdalen!" And then I thought that perhaps there might have been a dying prayer, and that there might have been penitential tears, and around that miserable spot at the last there may be more resurrection pomp than when Queen Elizabeth gets out of her mausoleum in Westminster Abbey.

But I must close the two lanterns.

CHAPTER VI.

SATANIC AGITATION.

"The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth he hath but a short time."—Revelation xii: 12.

Somehow the enemy of all good has found out what will be the hour of his dismissal from this world. He cried out to Christ: "Hast thou come to torment us before *the* time?" It is a healthful symptom that Satan is so active now in all our cities. It is the indication that he is going out of business. From the way that he flies around, he is practically saying: "Give me 500,000 souls; give me New York and Brooklyn; give me Boston and Philadelphia and Cincinnati; give me all the cities, and give them to me quickly, or I will never get them at all." That Satan is in paroxysm of excitement is certain. His establishments are nearly bankrupted. That the powers of darkness are nervous, knowing their time is short, is evident from the fact that, if a man stand in a pulpit speaking against the great iniquities of the day, they all begin to flutter.

A few nights ago, riding up Broadway, I asked the driver to stop at a street-lamp that I might better examine my memorandum (it happened to be in front of a place of amusement), when a man rushed out with great alarm and excitement, and said to the driver, "Is that Talmage you have inside there?" Men write me with commercial handwriting, protesting, evidently because they fear that sometimes in their midnight carousal they may meet a Christian reformer and explorer. I had thought to preach three or four sermons on the night side of city life ; but now that I find that all the powers of darkness are so agitated and alarmed and terrorized, I plant the battery for new assault upon the castles of sin, and shall go on from Sabbath morning to Sabbath morning, saying all I have to say, winding up this subject by several sermons on the glorious daybreak of Christian reform and charity which have made this cluster of cities the best place on earth to live in. Meanwhile, understand that whatever Satanic excitement may be abroad is only in fulfillment of the words of my text: "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweththat he hath but a short time."

A few nights ago, passing over from Brooklyn by South Ferry, our great metropolis looked like a mountain of picturesqueness and beauty. There were enough stars scattered over the heavens to suggest the street-lamps of that city which hath no need of the sun. The masts of the shipping against the sky brought to us the cosmopolitan feeling, and I said, "All the world is here." The spires of St. Paul's, and St. George's, and of Trinity pointed up through the starlight toward the only rescue for the dying populations of our great cities. Long rows of lamps skirted the city with fire. More than ten thousand gaslights, united with those kindled in towers and in the top stories of establishments which ply great industries in perpetual motion, threw on the sky from horizon to horizon the radiance of a vast illumination. Landing on New York side, the first thing that confronted us was the greatest nuisance and the grandest relief which New York has experienced in the last thirty years, the elevated railway, which, while it has commercial significance, has more moral meaning. Ruin and death to the streets through which it runs, it is the means of moral salvation to the crowded and smothered tenement-houses, which have been slaying their thousands year by year. Was there ever such a disfigurement and scarification of carpentry and engineering that wrought such a blissful result? The great obstacle to New York morals is the shape of the island. More than nine miles long, in some places it is only a mile and a half wide. While this immense water frontage of twenty miles is grand for commerce, it gives crowded residence to the population, unless, by some rapid mode of transit they can be whirled to distant homes at night, and whirled back again in the morning. These people must be near their work. Some of them do not like ferriage. Many of them are afraid of water. From the looks of some of their hands and faces, you find it proved that they are afraid of water. Hence they are huddled together in tenement-houses, which are the destruction of all health, all modesty, and the highest style of morals. For the last thirty years New York has been crowded to death. Hence, when on the night of our exploration we saw the rail-train flying through the air, I said to myself, "This is the first practical alleviation of the tenement-house system." People of small means will have an opportunity of getting to the better air and the better morals and the better accomodations of the country. But let not this style of improvement be made at the expense of those whose property is destroyed by the clatter and bang and wheeze of mid-air locomotive. Let cities, like individuals, pay for damages wrought, and for horses frightened out of their harness, and for carriages smashed against the curbstone. New York and Brooklyn and all our great cities need what London has already gained—

underground railroads which shall, without hindrance and without danger and without nuisance, put down our great populations just where they want to be, morning and night.

Passing up through the city, on the left was Castle Garden, now comparatively unattractive; but as we went past, my boyhood memory brought back to me the time when all that region was crowded with the finest equipages of New York and Brooklyn, and Castle Garden was thronged with a great multitude, many of whom had paid $14 for a seat to hear Jenny Lind sing. While God might make a hundred such artists in a year, He makes only one for a century. He who heard her sing would have no right to complain if he never heard any more music until he heard the doxology of the one hundred and forty and four thousand. There was the music of two worlds in her voice. While surrounded by those who almost deified her, she wrote in a private album a verse which it may not be wrong to quote:

In vain I seek for rest
  In all created good;
It leaves me still unblest
  And makes me cry for God.
And sure at rest I cannot be
Until my heart finds rest in Thee.

That was the secret of her music, and never, either day or night, do I pass Castle Garden, but I think of the Swedish cantatrice and the excited and vociferating assemblage, the majority of whom have joined the larger assemblages of the next world.

Passing on up into New York, we left on the right hand, the once fashionable Bowling Green, around which the wealth of New York congregated—the once elegant drawing-rooms, now occupied by steamship companies, where passengers get booked for Glasgow and Liverpool; the inhabitants of those once elegant drawing-rooms long ago booked for a longer voyage. Passing on up, we heard only the clatter of the horses' hoofs until we came to the head of Wall street, and by the two rows of gaslights, saw that on all that street there was not a foot stirring. And yet there seemed to come up on the night air the cachinnation of those on whose hands the stocks had gone up, and the sighing of jobbers on whose hands the stocks had gone down. The street, only half a mile long, and yet the avenue of fabulous accumulation, and appalling bankruptcy, and wild swindle, and suicide, and catastrophe, and death! While the sough of the wind came up from Wall street toward old Trinity, it seemed to say: "Where is Ketcham? Where is Swartwout? Where is Gay? Where is Fisk? Where is Cornelius Vanderbilt? Where is the Black Friday?" Then the tower of Trinity tolled nine times—three for the bankrupted, three for the suicided, three for the dead! "Hurry up, George," I said, "and get past this place:" for though I do not believe in ghosts, I wanted to get past that forsaken and all-suggestive night-scene of Wall street. Under the flickering gaslight one of active imagination might almost imagine he saw the ghosts of ten thousand fortunes dead and damned. Hastening on up a few blocks, we came where, on the right side, we saw large establishments ablaze from foundation to capstone. These were the great printing-houses of the New York dailies. We got out. We went in. We went up from editorial rooms to type-setters' and proof-readers' loft. These are the foundries where the great thunderbolts of public opinion are forged. How the pens scratched! How the types clicked! How the scissors cut! How the wheels rushed, all the world's news rolling over the cylinder like Niagara at Table Rock. Great torrents of opinion, of crimes; of accidents, of destroyed reputations, of avenged character. Who can estimate the mightiness for good or evil of a daily newspaper? Fingers of steel picking off the end of telegraphic wire, facts of religion and philosophy and science, and information from the four winds of heaven! In 1850 the Associated Press began to pay $200,000 a year for news. Some of the individual sheets paying $50,000 extra for dispatches. Some of them, independent of the Associated Press, with a wire rake gathering up sheaves of news from all the great harvest fields of the world. It is high time that good men understood that the printing press is the mightiest engine of all the centuries. The high-water mark of the printers type-case shows the ebb or flow of the great oceanic tides of civilization or Christianity. Just think of it! In 1835 all the daily newspapers of New York issued but 10,000 copies. Now there are 500,000, and taking the ordinary calculation that five people read a newspaper, two million, five hundred thousand people reading the daily newspapers of New York! I once could not understand how the Bible statement could be true when it says that "nations shall be born in a day." I can understand it now. Get the telegraph operators and the editors converted, and in twenty-four hours the whole earth will hear the salvation call. Nothing more impressed me in the night exploration than the power of the press. But it is carried on with oh! what aching eyes, and what exhaustion of health. I did not find more than one man out of ten who had anything like brawny health in the great newspaper establishments of New York. The malodor of the ink, however complete the ventilation; the necessity of toiling at hours when God has drawn the curtain of the night for natural sleep; the pressure of daily publication whatever breaks down; the temptation to intoxicating stimulants in order to keep the nervous energy up, a temptation which only the strongest can resist—all these make newspaper life something to be sympathized with. Do not begrudge the three or five cents you give for the newspaper. You buy not only intelligence with that, but you help pay for sleepless nights, and smarting eyeballs, and racked brain, and early sepulchre.

Coming out of these establishments, my mind full of the bewildering activities of the place, I stopped on the street and I said, "Now drive up Broadway, and turn down Chambers street to the left, and let us see what New York will be twenty years from now." The probability is that those who are criminal will stay criminal; the vast majority of those who are libertines will remain libertines; the vast majority of those who are thieves will stay thieves; the vast majority of those who are drunkards will stay drunkards. "What," say you, "no hope for the cities?" Ah! my heart was never so full of high and exhilarant hope as now. We turned down Chambers street until we came to the sign "Newsboys' Lodging-house," and we went in. Now, if there is anything I like it is boys. Not those brought up by registers, with the house heated by furnaces, and lads manipulated by some over-indulgent aunt, until their hair has been curled until they have got to be girls; but I mean genuine boys, such as God makes, with extra romp and hilarity, so that after they have been pounded by the world they shall have some exuberance left. Boys, genuine boys, who cannot keep quiet five minutes. Boys who can skate, and swim, and rove, and fly kites, and strike balls, and defend sickly playmates when they are imposed on, and get hungry in half an hour after they have dined, and who keep things stirred up and lively. Matthew Arnold's boys.

We entered the Newsboys' Lodging-house, and there we found them. I knew them right away, and they knew me, by a sort of instinct of friendliness. Their coats off; for, although outside it was biting cold, inside the room Christian charity had flooded everything with glorious summer. Over the doorway were written the words: "No boys that have homes can stop here." "What," I said, "can it be possible that all these bright and happy lads have been swept up from the street?" First, they are plunged into the bath, and then they pass under the manipulations of the barber, and then they are taken to the wardrobe, and in the name of Him who said, "I was naked and ye clothed me," they are arrayed in appropriate attire, each one paying, if he can, so there shall be no sense of pauperism; some of them paying one penny for all the privileges of a bountiful table, and the most extravagant paying only six cents. Gymnasium to straighten and invigorate the pinched bodies. Books for the mind. Religion for the soul. I said, "Can these boys sing?" and the answer came back in an anthem that shook the room:

Ring the bells of heaven,
For there's joy to-day.

I said, "What is this long, broad box with so many numbers nailed by a great many openings?" "Oh," they said, "this is the savings bank; the boys put their money here, and each one has a bank-book, and he gets his money at the beginning of the month." Meanwhile, if under urgency for a new top, or attractive confectionery, or any one of those undefinable things which crowd a boy's pockets, he wants money, he cannot get it. He must wait until the first of the month, and so thrift and economy are cultivated. I know statistics are generally very dry, but here is a statistic which has in it as much spirit as anything that Thackeray ever wrote, and as much sublimity as anything John Milton ever wrote: One hundred and forty-three thousand boys have been assembled in these newsboys' lodging-houses since the establishment of the institution; twelve thousand have been returned to friends, and fifteen thousand have deposited in this great box over $42,000; while many of the lads have been prepared for usefulness, becoming farmers, mechanics, merchants, bankers, clergymen, lawyers, doctors, judges of courts even, and many of them prepared for heaven, where some have already entered, confronting, personally, that Christ in whose compassion the institution was established. And this society all the time transporting the lads to Western farms. No reformation for them while they stay in the dens of New York. What must be the sensation of a lad who has lived all his days in Elm street, or Water street, when he wakes up on the Iowa prairie, with one hundred miles room on all sides? One of these lads, getting out West, wrote a letter, descriptive of the place, and urging others to come. He said:

> "I am getting along first rate. I am on probation in the Methodist Church. I will be entered as a member the first of next month. I now teach a Sunday-school class of eleven boys. I get along first rate with it. This is a splendid country to make a living in. If the boys running around the street with a blacking-box on their shoulder or a bundle of papers under their arms only knew what high old times we boys have out here they wouldn't hesitate about coming West, but come the first chance they got."

And to show the brightness of some of these lads, one of them made a little speech to his comrades just as he was about to start West, saying to his friends whom he was about to leave:

"Boys and gentlemen, perhaps you would like to hear sum'at about the West, the great West, you know, where so many of our old friends are settled down and going to be great men; some of the greatest men in the great Republic. Boys, that's the place for growing Congressmen, and Governors, and Presidents. Do you want to be newsboys always, and shoeblacks, and timber merchants in a small way, by selling matches? If you do, you will stay in New York, but if you don't, you will go out West and begin to be farmers; for the beginning of a farmer, my boys, is the making of a Congressman and a President. If you want to be loafers all your days, you will hang up your caps, and play around the groceries, and join fire-engine and truck companies; but if you want to be the man who will make his mark in the country, you will get up steam and go ahead. There is lots of the prairies waiting for you. You haven't any idea of what you may be yet, if you will take a bit of my advice. How do you know but if you are honest and good and industrious, you may get so much up in the ranks that you will not have a general or a judge your boss? You will be lifted on horseback when you go to take a ride on the prairies, and if you choose to go in a wagon, or on an excursion, you will find that the hard times don't touch you there, and the best of all will be that if it is good to-day it will be better to-morrow."

Is not a lad like that worth saving? There are thousands of them in New York. God have mercy on them!

As I came down off the steps of that benevolent institution, I said, "Surely, the evils of our cities are not more wonderful than their charities." Then I started out through New Bowery, and I came to the sign of the Howard Mission, famous on earth and in heaven for the fact that through it so many Christian merchants and bankers, and philanthropists have saved multitudes of boys and girls from eternal calamity. Last summer that institution, taking some children one or two hundred miles into the country to be taken care of gratuitously for two or three weeks on farms, the train stopped at the depot, and one lad, who had never seen a green field, rushed out and gathered up the grass and the flowers, and came back, and then took out a penny, his entire fortune, and handed it to the overseer, and said, "Here, take that penny and bring out more boys to see the flowers and the country." Seated on the platform of the Howard Mission that night, looking off upon these rescued children, I said within myself, "Who can estimate the reward for both worlds to these people who put their energies in such a Christ-like undertaking?" What a monument for Joseph Hoxie and Mr. Van Meter, the counselors of the institution in the past, and for A. S. Hatch and H. E. Tompkins, its advisers at the present, and thousands of people who in giving food through that institution have fed Christ, and in donating garments have clothed Christ, and in sheltering the wandering have housed Christ! God will pursue such men and women with His mercy to the edge of the pillow on which they die, and then, on the other side of the gate, He will give them a reception that will make all heaven echo and re-echo with their deeds. But oh! how much work—herculean, yea, omnipotent work—before all this vagrancy is ended! It is an authentic statistic that in this cluster of cities there are eighty thousand people over ten years of age who cannot write their names. Then what must be the ignorance of the multitudes under that age?

But I said to the driver, "We must hasten out on Broadway, for it is just the time when all the righteous and unrighteous places of amusement will be disbanding, and we shall see the people going up and down the streets. Coming from all sides, these are the great tides of life and death. The last orchestra had played. The curtain had dropped at the end of the play. The audiences of the concerts in the churches and the academies had all dispersed, moving up and down the street.

Good amusements are very good. Bad amusements are very bad. He who paints a fine picture, or who sculptures a beautiful statue, or sings a healthful song, or rouses an innocent laugh, or in any way cuts the strap of the burden of care on the world's shoulder, is a benefactor, and in the name of God I bless him; but between Canal street and Fourteenth street there are enough places of iniquitous amusement to keep all the world of darkness in perpetual holiday. In fifteen minutes, on any street almost of our city, you may find enough vicious amusements to invoke all the sulphur and brimstone that overwhelmed Sodom. The more than three hundred miles of Croton water pipes underlying New York city, emptied on these polluted places, could not wash them clean! You see the people coming out flushed with the strychnine wine taken in the recesses of the programme—some of the people in companionship that insures their present and eternal discomfiture, turning off from Broadway on the narrow streets running off either side! The recording angel shivered with horror as he penned their destiny.

Looking out of the carriage, I saw a tragedy on the corner of Broadway and Houston street. A young man, evidently doubting as to which direction he had better take, his hat lifted high enough so you could see he had an intelligent forehead, stout chest; he had a robust development. Splendid young man. Cultured young man. Honored young man. Why did he stop there while so many were going up and down? The fact is, that every man has a good angel and a bad angel contending for the mastery of his spirit, and there was a good angel and a bad angel struggling with that young man's soul at the corner of Broadway and Houston street. "Come with me," said the good angel; "I will take you home;

I will spread my wing over your pillow; I will lovingly escort you all through life under supernatural protection; I will bless every cup you drink out of, every couch you rest on, every doorway you enter; I will consecrate your tears when you weep, your sweat when you toil, and at the last I will hand over your grave into the hand of the bright angel of a Christian resurrection. In answer to your father's petition and your mother's prayer, I have been sent of the Lord out of heaven to be your guardian spirit. Come with me," said the good angel, in a voice of unearthly symphony. It was music like that which drops from a lute of heaven when a seraph breathes on it. "No, no," said the bad angel, "come with me; I have something better to offer; the wines I pour are from chalices of bewitching carousal; the dance I lead is over floor tessellated with unrestrained indulgencies; there is no God to frown on the temples of sin where I worship. The skies are Italian. The paths I tread are through meadows, daisied and primrosed. Come with me." The young man hesitated at a time when hesitation was ruin, and the bad angel smote the good angel until it departed, spreading wings through the starlight upward and away, until a door flashed open in the sky and forever the wings vanished. That was the turning point in that young man's history; for, the good angel flown, he hesitated no longer, but started on a pathway which is beautiful at the opening, but blasted at the last. The bad angel, leading the way, opened gate after gate, and at each gate the road became rougher and the sky more lurid, and what was peculiar, as the gate slammed shut it came to with a jar that indicated that it would never open. Passed each portal, there was a grinding of locks and a shoving of bolts; and the scenery on either side the road changed from gardens to deserts, and the June air became a cutting December blast, and the bright wings of the bad angel turned to sackcloth, and the eyes of light became hollow with hopeless grief, and the fountains, that at the start had tossed with wine, poured forth bubbling tears and foaming blood, and on the right side the road there was a serpent, and the man said to the bad angel, "What is that serpent?" and the answer was, "That is the serpent of stinging remorse." On the left side the road there was a lion, and the man asked the bad angel, "What is that lion?" and the answer was, "That is the lion of all-devouring despair." A vulture flew through the sky, and the man asked the bad angel, "What is that vulture?" and the answer was, "That is the vulture waiting for the carcasses of the slain." And then the man began to try to pull off of him the folds of something that had wound him round and round, and he said to the bad angel, "What is it that twists me in this awful convolution?" and the answer was, "That is the worm that never dies!" And then the man said to the bad angel, "What does all this mean? I trusted in what you said at the corner of Broadway and Houston street; I trusted it all, and why have you thus deceived me?" Then the last deception fell off the charmer, and it said, "I was sent forth from the pit to destroy your soul; I watched my chance for many a long year; when you hesitated that night on Broadway I gained my triumph; now you are here. Ha! ha! You are here. Come, now, let us fill these two chalices of fire, and drink together to darkness and woe and death. Hail! Hail!" Oh! young man, will the good angel sent forth by Christ, or the bad angel sent forth by sin, get the victory over your soul? Their wings are interlocked this moment above you, contending for your destiny, as above the Appenines, eagle and condor fight mid-sky. This hour may decide your destiny. God help you. To hesitate is to die!

CHAPTER VII.

AMONG THIEVES AND ASSASSINS.

A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead.—St. Luke x: 30.

This attack of highwaymen was in a rocky ravine, which gives to robbers a first-rate chance. So late as 1820, on that very road, an English traveler was shot and robbed. This wayfarer of the text not only lost his money and his apparel, but nearly lost his life. His assailants were not only thieves, but assassins. The scene of this lonely road from Jerusalem to Jericho is repeated every night in our great cities—men falling among thieves, getting wounded, and left half dead. In this series of Sabbath morning discourses on the night side of city life, as I have recently explored it, I have spoken to you of the night of pauperism, the night of debauchery and shame, the night of official neglect and bribery, and now I come to speak to you of the night of theft, the night of burglary, the night of assassination, the night of pistol and dirk and bludgeon. You say, what can there be in such a subject for me? Then you remind me of the man who asked Christ the question, "Who is my neighbor?" and in the reply of the text, Christ is setting forth the idea that wherever there is a man in trouble, there is your neighbor; and before I get through this morning, if the Lord will help me, I will show you that you have some very dangerous neighbors, and I will show you also what is your moral responsibility before God in regard to them.

I said to the chief official, "Give me two stout detectives for this night's work—men who are not only muscular, but who look muscular." I said to these detectives before we started on our midnight exploration, "Have you loaded pistols?" and they brought forth their firearms and their clubs, showing that they were ready for anything. Then I said, "Show me crime; show me crime in the worst shape, the most villainous and outrageous crime. In other words show me the worst classes of people to be saved by the power of Christ's gospel." I took with me only two officers of the law, for I want no one to run any risk in my behalf, and, having undertaken to show up the lowest depths of society, I felt I must go on until I had completed the work. One of the officers proposed to me that I take a disguise lest I be assailed. I said, "No; I am going on a mission of Christian work, and I am going to take the risks, and I shall go as I am." And so I went. You say to me, "Why didn't you first look after the criminal classes in Brooklyn?" I answer, it was not for any lack of material. Last year, in the city of Brooklyn, there were nearly 27,000 arrests for crime. Two hundred burglaries. Thirteen homicides. Twenty-seven highway robberies. Forty thousand lodgers in the station houses. Three hundred and thirty-six scoundrels who had their pictures taken for the Rogues Gallery, without any expense to those who sat for the pictures! Two hundred thousand dollars' worth of property stolen. Every kind of crime, from manslaughter to chicken thief. Indeed, I do not think there is any place in the land where you can more easily get your pocket picked, or your house burglarized, or your signature counterfeited, or your estate swindled, than in Brooklyn; but crime here is on a comparatively small scale, because we are a smaller city. The great depots of crime for this cluster of cities are in New York. It is a better hiding-place, the city is so vast, and all officers tell us that when a crime is committed in Jersey City, or is committed in Brooklyn, the villain attempts immediately to cross the ferry. While Brooklyn's sin is as enterprising as is possible for the number of inhabitants, crowd one million people on an island, and you have a stage and an audience on which and before whom crime may enact its worst tragedies.

There was nothing that more impressed me on that terrible night of exploration than the respect which crime pays to law when it is really confronted. Why do those eight or ten desperadoes immediately stop their blasphemy and their uproar and their wrangling? It is because an officer of the law calmly throws back the lappel of his coat and shows the badge of authority. The fact is that government is ordained of heaven, and just so far as the police officer does his duty, just so far is he a deputy of the Lord Almighty. That is the reason Inspector Murray, of New York, sometimes goes in and arrests four or five desperadoes. He is a man of comparatively slight stature, yet when one is backed up by omnipotent justice he can do anything. I said, "What is this glazed window, and who are these mysterious people going in and then coming out and passing down the street, looking to the pavement, and keeping a regular step until they hear a quick step behind them, and then darting down an alley?" This place, in the night of our exploration, was what the Bible calls "a den of thieves." They will not admit it. You cannot prove it against them, for the reason that the keeper and the patrons are the acutest men in the city. No sign of stolen goods, no loud talk about misdemeanors, but here a table surrounded by three or four persons whispering; yonder a table surrounded by three or four more persons whispering; before each man a mug of beer or stronger intoxicant. He will not drink to unconsciousness; he will only drink to get his courage up to the point of recklessness, all the while managing to keep his eye clear and his hand steady. These men around this table are talking over last night's exploit; their narrow escape from the basement door; how nearly they fell from the window-ledge of the second story; how the bullet grazed the hair. What is this bandaged hand you see in that room? That was cut by the window-glass as the burglar thrust his hand through to the inside fastening. How did that man lose his eye? It was destroyed three years ago by a premature flash of gunpowder in a store lock. Who are these three or four surrounding this other table? They are planning for to-night's villainy. They know just what hour the last member of the family will retire. They are in collusion with the servant, who has promised to leave one of the back windows open. They know at what time the man of wealth will leave his place of dissipation and start for home, and they are arranging it how they shall come out of the dark alley and bring him down with a slungshot. No sign of desperation in this room of thieves, and yet how many false keys, how many ugly pocket-knives, how many brass knuckles, how many revolvers! A few vulgar pictures on the wall, and the inevitable bar. Rum they must have to rest them after the exciting marauding. Rum they must have before they start on the new expedition of arson and larceny and murder. But not ordinary rum. It is poisoned four times. Poisoned first by the manufacturer; poisoned secondly by the wholesale dealer; poisoned thirdly by the retail dealer; poisoned fourthly by the saloon-keeper. Poisoned four times, it is just right to fit one for cruelty and desperation. These men have calculated to the last quarter of a glass how much they need to take to qualify them for their work. They must not take a drop too much nor a drop too little. These are the professional criminals of the city, between twenty-three and twenty-four hundred of them, in this cluster of cities. They are as thoroughly drilled in crime as, for good purposes, medical colleges train doctors, law colleges train lawyers, theological seminaries train clergymen. These criminals have been apprentices and journeymen; but now they are boss workmen. They have gone through the freshman, sophomore, junior and senior classes of the great university of crime, and have graduated with diplomas signed by all the faculty of darkness. They have no ambition for an easy theft, or an unskilled murder, or a blundering blackmail. They must have something difficult. They must have in their enterprise the excitement of peril. They must have something that will give them an opportunity of bravado. They must do something which amateurs in crime dare not do. These are the bank robbers, about sixty of them in this cluster of cities—men who somehow get in the bank during the daytime, then at night spring out upon the watchman, fasten him, and for the whole night have deliberate examination of the cashier's books to see whether he keeps his accounts correctly. These are the men who come in to examine the directory in the back part of your store while their accomplices are in the front part of the store engaging you in conversation, then dropping the directory and investigating the money safe. These are the forgers who get one of your canceled checks and one of your blank checks, and practice on the writing of your name until the deception is as perfect as the counterfeit check of Cornelius Vanderbilt, indorsed by Henry Keep, in 1870, for $75,000, which check was immediately cashed at the City Bank. These are the pickpockets, six hundred of them in this cluster of cities, who sit beside you in the stage and help you pass up the change! They stand beside you when you are shopping, and help you examine the goods, and weep beside you at the funeral, and sometimes bow their heads beside you in the house of God, doing their work with such adroitness that your affliction at the loss of the money is somewhat mitigated by your appreciation of the skill of the operator! The most successful of these are females, and, I suppose, on the theory that if a woman is good she is better than man, and if she is bad she is worse. She stands so much higher up than man that when she falls she falls further. Some of these criminals, pickpockets, and thieves also take the garb of clergymen. They look like doctors of divinity. With coats buttoned clear up to the chin, and white cravated, they look as if they were just going to pronounce the benediction, while they are all the time wondering where your watch is, or your portmonnaie is.

A thousand of the professional criminals do nothing but snatch things. They go in pairs, one of them keeping your attention in one part of the store, the other doing a lively business in another part of the store. At one end of the establishment the proprietor is smiling graciously on one who seems to be an exquisite lady, while in another part of the same establishment a roll of goods is taken up by a copartner in crime and put in a crocodile pocket, large enough to swallow everything. These professional criminals are the men who break in the windows of jewelry stores and snatch the jewels, and before the clerks have an opportunity of knowing what is the excitement are a block away, looking innocent, ready to come back and join in the pursuit of the offender, shouting with stentorian voice, "Stop, thief!" You wonder whether these people get large accumulation. No. Of the largest haul they get only a fifth, or a sixth, or a seventh part. It is the receiver of stolen goods that gets the profit. If these men during the course of their lives should get $50,000 they will live poor, and die poor, and be poor to all eternity. Among these professional criminals in our cities are the blackmailers—those who would have you pay a certain amount of money or have your character tarnished. If you are guilty I have no counsel to give in this matter; but if you are innocent let me say that no one of integrity need ever fear the blackmailer. All you have to do is to put the case immediately in the hands of Superintendent Walling of the New York police, or Superintendent Campbell of the Brooklyn police, and you will be vindicated. Depend upon it, however, that every dollar you pay to a blackmailer is toward your own everlasting enthrallment. A man in a cavern fighting a tigress might as well consent to give the tigress his right hand, letting her eat it up, with the supposition that she would let him off with the rest of his body, as for you to pay anything to a blackmailer with the idea of getting your character cleared. The thing to be done is to have the tigress shot, and that, the law is willing to do. Let me lay down a principle you can put in your memorandum books, and put in the front part of your Bible, and in the back part of your Bible, and put in your day-book, and put in your ledger—this principle: that no man's character is ever sacrificed until he sacrifices it himself. But you surrender your reputation, your fortune, your home, and your immortal soul, when you pay a farthing to a blackmailer.

Who are these men in this room at Hook Dock, or at the foot of Roosevelt street? They are professional criminals. Under the cover of the night they go down through the bay, or up and down the rivers. Finding two men in a row boat going to some steamer, or to one of the adjoining islands, they board the boat, rob the two men of their money, and, if they seem unreasonably opposed to giving up their money, taking their lives and giving them watery graves. These are the men who lounge around the solitary pier at night, and who clamber up on the side of the vessel lying at wharf, and, finding the captain asleep give him chloroform to help him sleep, and then knock the watchman overboard and take the valuables. Of this class were Howlett and Saul, who by twenty-one years of age had become the terror of the twenty-one miles of New York city water front, and who wound up their piracy by a murder on the bark "Thomas Watson," and crossed the gallows, relieving the world of their existence.

But in all these dens of thieves we find those who excite only our pity—people flung off the steeps of decent society. Having done wrong once, in despair they went to the bottom. Of such was that man who last Wednesday, in New York, stole a roll of goods, went to the station-house, said he was hungry, and asked to be sent to prison. Of such are those young men who make false entries in the account-book, resolved to "fix it up;" or who surreptitiously borrow from the commercial establishment, expecting to "fix it up;" but sickness comes, or accident comes, or a conjunction of unexpected circumstances, and they never "fix it up."

In disgrace they go down. Oh! how many, by force of circumstances, and at the start with no very bad idea, get off the track and perish. A gentleman sitting in this assemblage this morning told me of an incident which occurred in a large commercial establishment, I believe the fourth in size in the whole country. The employer said to a young lady in the establishment, "You must dress better." She said, "I cannot dress better; I get $6 a week, and I pay $4 for my board, and I have $2 for dress and for my car fare; I cannot dress better." Then he said, "You must get it in some other way." Well, I suppose she could steal. I do not know how that incident affects you; but when it was told to me it made every drop of my blood, from scalp to heel, tingle with indignation. The fact is that there are thousands of men and women dropping into dishonesty and crime by force of circumstances, and by their destitution. Under the same kind of pressure you and I would have perished. It is despicable to stand on shore laughing at the shipwrecked struggling in the breakers when we ought to be getting out the rockets and the lifeboat and the ropes from the wrecking establishment. How much have you ever done to get this class ashore? In our city of Brooklyn we grip them of the police. Then we hustle them into a court room amid a great crowd of gaping spectators. Then we throw them into the worst jail on the continent—Raymond Street Jail. We put them in there with three or four confirmed criminals, and then actually deny $500 to the chaplain, who is giving his time for the alleviation of their condition, and putting our refusal of the $500 on the ground that if we support that thing in the penitentiary, and if we have religious services there it will be so much like uniting church and State!

"But," says some one at this point in my discourse, "where does all this crime come from?" Let me tell you that New York is now paying for the political dishonesties of ten years ago. Do you believe that the political iniquities of 1868, 1869, 1870, and 1871 could be enacted in any city without demoralizing the community from top to bottom? Look at the sham elections of 1868 and 1869. Think of those times when a criminal was auditor of public accounts, and honorable gentlemen in the legal profession were put out of sight by shyster lawyers, and some of the police magistrates were worse than the criminals arraigned before them, and when the most notorious thief since the creation of the world, was a State Senator, holding princely levee at the Delevan House at Albany. Ah! my friends, those were the times when thousands of men were put on the wrong track. They said: "Why, what's the use of honest work when knavery declares such large dividends? What's the use of my going afoot in shoes I have to pay for myself, when I can have gilded livery sweeping through Broadway supported by public funds?" The rule was, as far as I remember it: Get an office with a large salary; if you cannot get an office with a large salary, get an office with a small salary, and then steal all you can lay your hands on, and call them "perquisites;" and then give subordinate offices to your friends, and let them help you on with the universal swindle, and get more "perquisites." Many of the young men of the cities were then eighteen years of age. They saw their parents hard at work with trowel and yardstick and pen, getting only a cramped living, while those men who were throwing themselves on their political wits had plenty of money and no work. Do you wonder that thousands adopted a life of dissipated indolence? Ten years having passed, they are now twenty-eight years of age, and in full swing of vagabondism. The putrid politics of ten years ago sowed much of the crop which is now being harvested by the almshouse and the penitentiary. But you say, "What is the practical use of this subject this morning? Have I any relation to it?" You have. In the last judgment you will have to give answer for your relation to it. Through all eternity you will feel the consequences of your relation to it. I could not waste my time, nor your time, in a discussion if there were not some practical significance to it. First of all, I give you a statistic which ought to make every office-table, and every counting-room desk, and every money-safe quake and tremble. It is the statistic that larcenies in New York city, directly and indirectly, cost that city $6,000,000 per year. There are all the moneys taken, in the first place. Then there are the prisons and the station-houses. Then there are the courts. Then there is the vast machinery of municipal government for the arraignment and treatment of villainy. Why, the Court of Sessions and the police courts cost the city of New York about $200,000 per year. The police force directly and indirectly costs the city of New York over $2,000,000 a year, and all that expenditure puts its tax on every bill of lading, on every yard of goods, on every parlor, every nursery, every store, every shop, every brick from foundation to capstone, every foot of ground from the south side of Castle Garden to the north side of Central Park, and upon all Brooklyn, and upon all Jersey City, for the reason that the interests of these cities are so interlocked that what is the prosperity of one is the prosperity of all, and what is the calamity of one is the calamity of all. But I do not, this morning, address you as financiers. I address you as moralists and Christian men and women, who before God have a responsibility for all this turpitude and scoundrelism, unless in every possible way you try to stop it and redeem it. "Oh!" says some one in the house, "such criminals as that cannot be reformed." I reply: Then you are stupidly ignorant of Christianity. Who was the man on the right-hand cross when Jesus was expiring? A thief—a dying thief. Where did he go to? To heaven. Christ said to him: "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." In that most conspicuous moment of the world's history, Christ demonstrating to all ages that the worst criminal can be saved. Who is that man in the Fourth Ward, New York, preaching the gospel every night of the week, and preaching it all the year round, and bringing more drunkards and thieves and criminals to the heart of a pardoning God than any twenty churches in Brooklyn or New York. Jerry McAuley, the converted river thief. That man took me to his front window the other evening, and he said, "Do you see that grog-shop over there?" I said, "Yes; I see it." "Well," he said, "I once was pitched out of that by the proprietor for being drunken and noisy. The grace of God has done a great deal for me. I was going along the street the other day, and that man who owned that groggery then, and who owns it now, wanted a favor of me, and he called to me. He did not call me drunken Jerry; but he said *Mister* McAuley—*Mister* McAuley!"

O! if the grace of God could do as much for that man it can save any outcast. If not, then what is the use of Paul's address when he says, "Let him that stole, steal no more"? I will tell you something—I do not care whether you like it or not—that at last, in heaven, there will be five hundred thousand converted thieves, pickpockets, gamblers, debauchees, murderers and outcasts, all saved by the grace of God, washed clean and prepared for glory. That exquisite out there gives a twitch to his kid glove, and that lady brings the skirt of her silk dress nearer her, as though she were afraid of having that truth tarnish her. "Why," says some one in the house, "are you going to make heaven such a common place as that?' I do not make it common. God makes it common. It is to be the most common place in the whole universe. By that I mean they are going to come up from all classes and conditions, and from the very lowest depths of society, washed clean by the grace of God, and entering heaven. "But," say some people, "what am I to do?" I will tell you three things, anyhow, you can do. First, avoid putting people in your employ amid too great temptation. You can take a young man in your employ and put him in a position where nine hundred and ninety-nine chances out of a thousand are that he will do wrong. Now, I say you have no right to do that. If you have any mercy on the criminal classes, and if you do not want to multiply their number, look out how you put people under temptation. In the second place, you can do this: you can speak a cheerful word when a man wants to reform. What chance is there for those who have gone astray? Here they are in the lowest depths of society, first of all, with their evil proclivities; then, with their evil associations. But suppose they conquer these evil proclivities, and break away from them. Now, they have come up to the door of society. Who will let them in? Will you? No; you dare not. They will go all around these doors of decent society, and find five hundred, and knock—no admittance; and knock—no admittance; and knock—no admittance. Now, I say it is your duty as a Christian man to help these people when they want to come up and come back. There is a third thing you can do, and that is, be the stanch friends of prison reform associations, home missionary societies, children's aid societies, and all those beneficent institutions which are trying to save our cities. But perhaps I ought to do my own work now, leaving yours for you to do some other time. I will now do that work. Very probably there is not in all this house one person who is known as a criminal, and yet I suppose there are scores of persons in this house who have done wrong. Now, perhaps I may meet their case healthfully and encouragingly when I tell them what I said to two young men. One young man said to me: "I have taken from my employer $2,500 in small amounts, but amounting to that. What shall I do?" I said, "Pay it back." He said, "I can't pay it back." Then I said, "Get your friends to help you pay it." He said, "I have no friends that will help me." Then I said, "I will give you two items of advice: First, go home and kneel down before God and ask his pardon. Then, to-morrow morning, when you go over to the store, get the head men of the firm in the private office, and tell them you have something very important to communicate, and let the door be locked. Then tell the whole story and ask their pardon. If they are decent men—not to say any thing about their being Christians or not Christians—if they are decent men, they will forgive you and help you to start again." "But," he said, "suppose they don't?" "Then," I said, "you have the Lord Almighty to see you through, and no man ever flung himself at Christ's feet but he was helped and delivered." Another young man came to me and said, "I have taken money from my employer. What shall I do?" I said, "Pay it back." "Well," he said, "I took a very large amount—I nearly paid it all back." I said, "Now, how long before you can pay it all back?" "Well," he said, "I can in two weeks, but my conscience disturbs me very much, and I want your counsel." It was a delicate case. I said to him, "You are sure you can pay it in two weeks?" "Yes; but," he said, "suppose I die?" I said to him: "If you can pay that all up, every farthing of it, in two weeks, pay it, and God don't ask you to disgrace yourself, or your family, and you won't die in two weeks. I see by the way you have been paying this up that you are going to be delivered. Ask God's pardon for what you have done, and never do so again."

It is very easy to be hard in making a rule, but I say the Gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of mercy, and wherever you find anybody in trouble, get him out. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts." You see, I am preaching a very practical sermon this morning. I know what are all the temptations of business life, and I did not come on this platform this morning to discourage anybody. I come to speak a word of good cheer to all the wandering and the lost, and I believe I am speaking it. The fact is, these cities are going to be redeemed. You know there is going to be another deluge. "Why," you say, "I thought the rainbow at the end of the great deluge, and the rainbow after every shower, was a sign that there would never be a deluge again!" But there will be another deluge. It will rain more than forty days and forty nights. The ark that will float that deluge will be immeasurably larger than Noah's ark, for it will hold a quadrillion of passengers. It will be the deluge of mercy, and the ark that floats that deluge will have five doors—one at the north to let in the frozen populations; one at the south to let in the sweltering and the sunburned; one at the east to let all China come in; one at the west, to let America in; one at the top, to let Christ, with all his flashing train of cherubim and archangel enter. And, as the rainbow of the ancient deluge gave sign that there would never be a deluge of destruction again, so the rainbow of this last deluge will give sign that the deluge will never depart. "For the knowledge of God shall cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea." Oh! ship of salvation, sail on. With all thy countless freight of immortals, put for the eternal shore. The thunders of the last day shall be the cannonade that will greet you into the harbor. Church triumphant, stretch down your arms of light across the gangway to welcome into port, church militant. "Hallelujah! for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Hallelujah! Amen!

CHAPTER VIII.

CLUB-HOUSES—LEGITIMATE AND ILLEGITIMATE.

Let the young men now arise and play before us.—II. Samuel ii: 14.

There are two armies encamped by the pool of Gibeon. The time hangs heavily on their hands. One army proposes a game of sword-fencing. Nothing could be more healthful and innocent. The other army accepts the challenge. Twelve men against twelve men, the sport opens. But something went adversely. Perhaps one of the swordsmen got an unlucky clip, or in some way had his ire aroused, and that which opened in sportfulness ended in violence, each one taking his contestant by the hair, and then with the sword thrusting him in the side; so that that which opened in innocent fun ended in the massacre of all the twenty-four sportsmen. Was there ever a better illustration of what was true then, and is true now, that that which is innocent may be made destructive?

In my explorations of the night side of city life, I have found out that there is a legitimate and an illegitimate use of the club-house. In the one case it may become a heathful recreation, like the contest of the twenty-four men in the text when they began their play; in the other case it becomes the massacre of body, mind, and soul, as in the case of these contestants of the text when they had gone too far with their sport. All intelligent ages have had their gatherings for political, social, artistic, literary purposes—gatherings characterized by the blunt old Anglo-Saxon designation of "club." If you have read history, you know that there was a King's Head Club, a Ben Jonson Club; a Brothers' Club, to which Swift and Bolingbroke belonged; a Literary Club, which Burke and Goldsmith and Johnson and Boswell made immortal; a Jacobin Club, a Benjamin Franklin Junto Club. Some of these to indicate justice, some to favor the arts, some to promote good manners, some to despoil the habits, some to destroy the soul. If one will write an honest history of the clubs of England, Ireland, Scotland, France, and the United States for the last one hundred years, he will write the history of the world. The club was an institution born on English soil, but it has thrived well in American atmosphere. We have in this cluster of cities a great number of them, with seventy thousand members, so called, so known; but who shall tell how many belong to that kind of club where men put purses together and open house, apportioning the expense of caterer and servants and room, and having a sort of domestic establishment—a style of club-house which in my opinion is far better than the ordinary hotel or boarding-house? But my object now is to speak of club-houses of a different sort, such as the Union League, which was established during the war, having patriotic purposes, which has now between thirteen and fourteen hundred members, which is now also the headquarters of Republicanism; likewise the Manhattan, with large admission fee, four or five hundred members, the headquarters of the Democracy; like the Union Club, established in 1836, when New York had only a little over three hundred thousand inhabitants, their present building having cost $250,000—they have a membership of between eight and nine hundred people, among them some of the leading merchant princes of the land; like the Lotos, where journalists, dramatists, sculptors, painters and artists, from all branches, gather together to discuss newspapers, theatres, and elaborate art; like the Americus, which camps out in summer time, dimpling the pool with its hook and arousing the forest with its stag hunt; like the Century Club, which has its large group of venerable lawyers and poets; like the Army and Navy Club, where those who engaged in warlike service once on the land or the sea now come together to talk over the days of carnage; like the New York Yacht Club, with its floating palaces of beauty upholstered with velvet and paneled with ebony, having all the advantages of electric bell, and of gaslight, and of king's pantry, one pleasure-boat costing three thousand, another fifteen thousand, another thirty thousand, another sixty-five thousand dollars, the fleet of pleasure-boats belonging to the club having cost over two million dollars; like the American Jockey Club, to which belong men who have a passionate fondness for horses, fine horses, as had Job when, in the Scriptures, he gives us a sketch of that king of beasts, the arch of its neck, the nervousness of its foot, the majesty of its gait, the whirlwind of its power, crying out: "Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? The glory of his nostrils is terrible; he paweth in the valley and rejoiceth in his strength, he saith among the trumpets ha! ha! and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting;" like the Travelers' Club, the Blossom Club, the Palette Club, the Commercial Club, the Liberal Club, the Stable Gang Club, the Amateur Boat Club, the gambling clubs, the wine clubs, the clubs of all sizes, the clubs of all morals, clubs as good as good can be, and clubs as bad as bad can be, clubs innumerable. No series of sermons on the night side of city life would be complete without a sketch of the clubs, which, after dark, are in full blast.

During the day they are comparatively lazy places. Here and there an aged man reading a newspaper, or an employee dusting a sofa, or a clerk writing up the accounts; but when the curtain of the night falls on the natural day, then the curtain of the club-house hoists for the entertainment. Let us hasten up, now, the marble stairs. What an imperial hallway! See! here are parlors on this side, with the upholstery of the Kremlin and the Tuilleries; and here are dining-halls that challange you to mention any luxury that they cannot afford; and here are galleries with sculpture, and paintings, and lithographs, and drawings from the best of artists, Cropsey, and Bierstadt, and Church, and Hart, and Gifford—pictures for every mood, whether you are impassioned or placid; shipwreck, or sunlight over the sea; Sheridan's Ride, or the noonday party of the farmers under the tree; foaming deer pursued by the hounds in the Adirondacks, or the sheep on the lawn. On this side there are reading-rooms where you find all newspapers and magazines. On that side there is a library, where you find all books, from hermeneutics to the fairy tale. Coming in and out there are gentlemen, some of whom stay ten minutes, others stay many hours. Some of these are from luxuriant homes, and they have excused themselves for a while from the domestic circle that they may enjoy the larger sociability of the club-house. These are from dismembered households, and they have a plain lodging somewhere, but they come to this club-room to have their chief enjoyment. One blackball amid ten votes will defeat a man's becoming a member. For rowdyism, for drunkenness, for gambling, for any kind of misdemeanor, a member is dropped out. Brilliant club-house from top to bottom. The chandeliers, the plate, the furniture, the companionship, the literature, the social prestige, a complete enchantment.

But the evening is passing on, and so we hasten through the hall and down the steps, and into the street, and from block to block until we come to another style of club-house. Opening the door, we find the fumes of strong drink and tobacco something almost intolerable. These young men at this table, it is easy to understand what they are at, from the flushed cheek, the intent look, the almost angry way of tossing the dice, or of moving the "chips." They are gambling. At another table are men who are telling vile stories. They are three-fourths intoxicated, and between 12 and 1 o'clock they will go staggering, hooting, swearing, shouting on their way home. That is an only son. On him all kindness, all care, all culture has been bestowed. He is paying his parents in this way for their kindness. That is a young married man, who, only a few months ago, at the altar, made promises of kindness and fidelity, every one of which he has broken. Walk through and see for yourself. Here are all the implements of dissipation and of quick death. As the hours of the night go away, the conversation becomes imbecile and more debasing. Now it is time to shut up. Those who are able to stand will get out on the pavement and balance themselves against the lamp-post, or against the railings of the fence. The young man who is not able to stand will have a bed improvised for him in the club-house, or two not quite so overcome with liquor will conduct him to his father's house, and they will ring the door-bell, and the door will open, and the two imbecile escorts will introduce into the hallway the ghastliest and most hellish spectacle that ever enters a front door—a drunken son. If the dissipating club-houses of this country would make a contract

A GAMBLING ESTABLISHMENT.

with the Inferno to provide it ten thousand men a year and for twenty years, on the condition that no more should be asked of them, the club-houses could afford to make that contract, for they would save homesteads, save fortunes, save bodies, minds, and souls. The ten thousand men who would be sacrificed by that contract would be but a small part of the multitude sacrificed without the contract. But I make a vast difference between clubs. I have belonged to four clubs: A theological club, a ball club, and two literary clubs. I got from them physical rejuvenation and moral health. What shall be the principle? If God will help me, I will lay down three principles by which you may judge whether the club where you are a member, or the club to which you have been invited, is a legitimate or an illegitimate club-house.

First of all I want you to test the club by its influences on home, if you have a home. I have been told by a prominent gentleman in club life that three-fourths of the members of the great clubs of these cities are married men. That wife soon loses her influence over her husband who nervously and foolishly looks upon all evening absence as an assault on domesticity. How are the great enterprises of art and literature and beneficence and public weal to be carried on if every man is to have his world bounded on one side by his front door-step, and on the other side by his back window, knowing nothing higher than his own attic, or nothing lower than his own cellar? That wife who becomes jealous of her husband's attention to art, or literature, or religion, or charity, is breaking her own sceptre of conjugal power. I know in this church an instance where a wife thought that her husband was giving too many nights to Christian service, to charitable service, to prayer-meetings, and to religious convocation. She sytematically decoyed him away until now he attends neither this nor any other church, and is on a rapid way to destruction, his morals gone, his money gone, and, I fear, his soul gone. Let any Christian wife rejoice when her husband consecrates evenings to the service of God, or to charity, or to art, or to anything elevated; but let not men sacrifice home life to club life. I have the rolls of the members of a great many of the prominent clubs of these cities, and I can point out to you a great many names of men who are guilty of this sacrilege. They are as genial as angels at the club-house, and as ugly as sin at home. They are generous on all subjects of wine suppers, yachts, and fast horses, but they are stingy about the wife's dress and the children's shoes. That man has made that which might be a healthful recreation an usurper of his affections, and he has married it, and he is guilty of moral bigamy. Under this process the wife, whatever her features, becomes uninteresting and homely. He becomes critical of her, does not like the dress, does not like the way she arranges her hair, is amazed that he ever was so unromantic as to offer her hand and heart. She is always wanting money, money, when she ought to be discussing Eclipses, and Dexter, and Derby Day, and English drags with six horses, all answering the pull of one "ribbon."

I tell you, there are thousands of houses in Brooklyn and New York being clubbed to death! There are club-houses in these cities where membership always involves domestic shipwreck. Tell me that a man has joined a certain club, tell me nothing more about him for ten years, and I will write his history if he be still alive. The man is a wine-guzzler, his wife broken-hearted or prematurely old, his fortune gone or reduced, and his home a mere name in a directory. Here are six secular nights in the week. "What shall I do with them?" says the father and the husband. "I will give four of those nights to the improvement and entertainment of my family, either at home or in good neighborhood; I will devote one to charitable institutions; I will devote one to the club." I congratulate you. Here is a man who says, "I will make a different division of the six nights. I will take three for the club and three for other purposes." I tremble. Here is a man who says, "Out of the six secular nights of the week, I will devote five to the club-house and one to the home, which night I will spend in scowling like a March squall, wishing I was out spending it as I had spent the other five." That man's obituary is written. Not one out of ten thousand that ever gets so far on the wrong road ever stops. Gradually his health will fail, through late hours and through too much stimulus. He will be first-rate prey for erysipelas and rheumatism of the heart. The doctor coming in will at a glance see it is not only present disease he must fight, but years of fast living. The clergyman, for the sake of the feelings of the family, on the funeral day will only talk in religious generalities. The men who got his yacht in the eternal rapids will not be at the obsequies. They will have pressing engagements that day. They will send flowers to the coffin-lid, and send their wives to utter words of sympathy, but they will have engagements elsewhere. They never come. Bring me mallet and chisel, and I will cut on the tombstone that man's epitaph, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." "No," you say, "that would not be appropriate." "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." "No," you say, "that would not be appropriate." Then give me the mallet and the chisel, and I will cut an honest epitaph: "Here lies the victim of a dissipating club-house!" I think that damage is often done by the scions of some aristocratic family, who belong to one of these dissipating club-houses. People coming up from humbler classes feel it an honor to belong to the same club, forgetting the fact that many of the sons and grandsons of the large commercial establishments of the last generation are now, as to mind, imbecile; as to body, diseased; as to morals, rotten. They would have got through their property long ago if they had had full possession of it; but the wily ancestors, who got the money by hard knocks, foresaw how it was to be, and they tied up everything in the will. Now, there is nothing of that unworthy descendant but his grandfather's name and roast beef rotundity. And yet how many steamers there are which feel honored to lash fast that worm-eaten tug, though it drags them straight into the breakers.

Another test by which you can find whether your club is legitimate or illegitimate—the effect it has on your secular occupation. I can understand how through such an institution a man can reach commercial successes. I know some men have formed their best business relations through such a channel. If the club has advantaged you in an honorable calling it is a legitimate club. But has your credit failed? Are bargain-makers more cautious how they trust you with a bill of goods? Have the men whose names were down in the commercial agency A 1 before they entered the club, been going down since in commercial standing? Then look out! You and I every day know of commercial establishments going to ruin through the social excesses of one or two members. Their fortunes beaten to death with ball-players' bat, or cut amidships by the front prow of the regatta, or going down under the swift hoofs of the fast horses, or drowned in large potations of Cognac and Monongahela. Their club-house was the "Loch Earn." Their business house was the "Ville du Havre." They struck, and the "Ville du Havre" went under. Or, to take illustration from last Monday night's disaster: Their club-house was the "Eilion," and their business house was the "Pommerania." They struck, and the "Pommerania" went under.

A third test by which you may know whether the club to which you belong, or the club to whose membership you are invited, is a legitimate club or an illegitimate club, is this: What is its effect on your sense of moral and religious obligation? Now, if I should take the names of all the people in this audience this morning, and put them on a roll and then I should lay that roll back of this organ, and a hundred years from now some one should take that roll and call it from A to Z, there would not one of you answer. I say that any association that makes me forget that fact is a bad association. When I go to Chicago I am sometimes perplexed at Buffalo, as I suppose many travelers are, as to whether it is better to take the Lake Shore route or the Michigan Central, equally expeditious and equally safe, getting at the destination at the same time; but suppose that I hear that on one route the track is torn up, and the bridges are torn down, and the switches are unlocked? It will not take me a great while to decide which road to take. Now, here are two roads into the future, the Christian and the unchristian, the safe and the unsafe. Any institution or any association that confuses my idea in regard to that fact is a bad institution and a bad association. I had prayers before I joined the club. Did I have them after? I attended the house of God before I connected myself with the club. Since that union with the club do I absent myself from religious influences? Which would you rather have in your hand when you come to die, a pack of cards or a Bible? Which would you rather have pressed to your lips in the closing moment, the cup of Belshazzarean wassail or the chalice of Christian communion? Who would you rather have for your pall-bearers, the elders of a Christian church, or the companions whose conversation was full of slang and innuendo? Who would you rather have for your eternal companions, those men who spend their evenings betting, gambling, swearing, carousing, and telling vile stories, or your little child, that bright girl whom the Lord took? Oh! you would not have been away so much nights, would you, if you had known she was going away so soon? Dear me, your house has never been the same place since. Your wife has never brightened up. She has not got over it; she never will get over it. How long the evenings are, with no one to put to bed, and no one to tell the beautiful Bible story! What a pity it is that you cannot spend more evenings at home in trying to help her bear that sorrow! You can never drown that grief in the wine cup. You can never break away from the little arms that used to be flung around your neck when she used to say, "Papa, do stay home to-night—do stay home to-night." You will never be able to wipe from your lips the dying kiss of your little girl. The fascination of a dissipating club-house is so great that sometimes a man has turned his back on his home when his child was dying of scarlet fever. He went away. Before he got back at midnight the eyes had been closed, the undertaker had done his work, and the wife, worn out with three weeks watching, lay unconscious in the next room. Then there is a rattling of the night-key in the door, and the returned father comes up stairs, and he sees the cradle gone, and the windows up, and says, "What's the matter?" In the judgment day he will find out what was the matter. Oh! man astray, God help you! I am going to make a very stout rope. You know that sometimes a rope-maker will take very small threads, and wind them together until, after a while, they become ship-cable. And I am going to take some very small, delicate threads, and wind them together until they make a very stout rope. I will take all the memories of the marriage day, a thread of laughter, a thread of light, a thread of music, a thread of banqueting, a thread of congratulation, and I twist them together, and I have one strand. Then I take a thread of the hour of the first advent in your house, a thread of the darkness that preceded, and a thread of the light that followed, and a thread of the beautiful scarf that little child used to wear when she bounded out at eventide to greet you, and then a thread of the beautiful dress in which you laid her away for the resurrection. And then I twist all these threads together, and I have another strand. Then I take a thread of the scarlet robe of a suffering Christ, and a thread of the white raiment of your loved ones before the throne, and a string of the harp cherubic, and a string of the harp seraphic, and I twist them all together, and I have a third strand. "Oh!" you say, "either strand is strong enough to hold fast a world." No. I will take these strands, and I will twist them together, and one end of that rope I will fasten, not to the communion table for it shall be removed—not to a pillar of the organ, for that will crumble in the ages, but I wind it 'round and 'round the cross of a sympathizing Christ, and having fastened one end of the rope to the cross I throw the other end to you. Lay hold of it! Pull for your life! Pull for heaven!

CHAPTER IX.

POISON IN THE CALDRON.

"O thou man of God, there is death in the pot."—II. Kings iv: 10

Elisha had gone down to lecture to the theological students in the seminary at Gilgal. He found the students very hungry. Students are apt to be. In order that he might proceed with his lectures successfully, he sends out some servants to gather food for these hungry students. The servants are somewhat reckless in their work, and while they gather up some healthful herbs, they at the same time gather coloquintida, a bitter, poisonous, deathful weed, and they bring all the herbs to the house and put them in a caldron and stir them up, and then bring the food to the table, where are seated the students and their professor. One of the students takes some of the mixture and puts it to his lips, and immediately tastes the coloquintida, and he cries out to the professor: "O thou man of God, there is death in the pot." What consternation it threw upon the group. What a fortunate thing it was he found out in time, so as to save the lives of his comrades.

Well, there are now in the world a great many caldrons of death. The coloquintida of mighty temptations fills them. Some taste and quit, and are saved; others taste and eat on, and die. Is not that minister of Christ doing the right thing when he points out these caldrons of iniquity and cries the alarm, saying: "Beware! There is death in the pot"?

In a palace in Florence there is a fresco of Giotto.

For many years that fresco was covered up with two inches thickness of whitewash, and it has only been in recent times that the hand of art has restored that fresco. "What sacrilege," you say, "to destroy the work of such a great master." But there is no sadness in that compared with the fact that the image of God in the soul has been covered up and almost obliterated so that no human hand can restore the Divine lineaments.

Iniquity is a coarse, jagged thing, that needs to be roughly handled. You have no right to garland it with fine phrase or lustrous rhetoric. You cannot catch a buffalo with a silken lasso. Men have no objections to having their sin looked at in a pleasant light. They will be very glad to sit for their photographs if you mak a handsome picture. But every Christian philanthropist must sometimes go forth and come in violent collision with transgression. I was in a whaling port, and I saw a vessel that had been on a whaling cruise come into the harbor, and it had patched sail and spliced rigging and bespattered deck, showing hard times and rough work. And so I have seen Christian philanthropists come back from some crusade against public iniquities. They have been compelled to acknowledge that it has not been yachting over summer lakes, but it has been outriding a tempest and harpooning great Behemoths.

A company of emigrants settle in a wild region. The very first day a beast from the mountains comes down and carries off one of the children, and the next day another beast comes and carries off another child. Forthwith all the neighbors band together, and with torch in one hand and gun in the other they go down into the caverns where those wild beasts are secreted, and slay them.

Now, my Christian friends, this morning I want to go back of all public iniquity and find out its hiding-place. I want to know what are the sources of its power, or, to resume the figure of my text, I want to know what are the caldrons from which these iniquities are dipped out.

Unhappy and undisciplined homes *are the source of much iniquity.* A good home is deathless in its influences. Parents may be gone. The old homestead may be sold and have passed out of the possession of the family. The house itself may be torn down. The meadow brook that ran in front of the house may have changed its course or have dried up. The long line of old-fashioned sunflowers and the hedges of wild rose may have been graded, and in place thereof are now the beauties of modern gardening. The old poplar tree may have cast down its crown of verdure and may have fallen. You say you would like to go back a little while and see that home, and you go, and oh, how changed it is! Yet that place will never lose its charm over your soul. That first earthly home will thrill through your everlasting career. The dew-drops that you dashed from the chickweed as you drove the cows afield thirty years ago; the fire flies that flashed in your father's home on summer nights when the evenings were too short for a candle; the tinged pebbles that you gathered in your apron on the margin of the brook; the berries that you strung into a necklace, and the daisies that you plucked for your hair,—all have gone into your sentiments and tastes, and you will never get over them. The trundle bed where you slept; the chair where you sat; the blue-edged dish out of which you ate; your sister's skipping-rope; your brother's ball; your kite; your hoop; your mother's smile; your father's frown,—they are all part of the fibre of your immortal nature. The mother of missionary Schwartz threw light on the dusky brow of the savages to whom he preached long after she was dead. The mother of Lord Byron pursued him, as with a fiend's fury, into all lands, stretching gloom and death into "Childe Harold" and "Don Juan," and hovering in darkness over the lonely grave of Missolonghi.

Rascally and vagabond people for the most part come forth from unhappy homes. Parents harsh and cruel on the one hand, or on the other lenient to perfect looseness, are raising up a generation of vipers. A home in which scolding and fault-finding predominate is blood relation to the gallows and penitentiary. Petulance is a reptile that may crawl up into the family nest and crush it. There are parents who disgust their children even with religion. They scold their little ones for not loving God. They go about even their religious duties in an exasperating way. Their house is full of the war-whoop of contention, and from such scenes husbands and children dash out into places of dissipation to find their lost peace, or the peace they never had. O, is there some mother here, like Hagar, leading her Ishmael into the desert to be smitten of the thirst and parched in the sand? In the solemn birth-hour a voice fell straight from the skies into that dwelling, saying: "Take this child and nurse it for Me, and I will give thee thy wages." When angels of God at nightfall hover over that dwelling, do they hear the little ones lisp the name of Jesus? O, traveller for eternity, with your little ones gathered up under your robes, are you sure you are on the right road, or are you leading them on a dangerous and winding bridle path, off which their inexperienced feet may slip, and up which comes the howling of the wolf and the sound of loosening ledge and tumbling avalanche? Blessed the family altar where the children kneel. Blessed the cradle where the Christian mother rocks the Christian child. Blessed the song the little one sings at nightfall when sleep is closing the eyes and roosening the hand from the toy on the pillow. Blessed the mother's heart whose every throb is a prayer to God for the salvation of her children. The world grows old, and soon the stars will cease to illuminate it, and the herbage to clothe it, and the mountains to guard it, and the waters to refresh it, and the heavens to overspan it, and the long story of its sin, and shame, and glory, and triumph will turn into ashes; but parental influences, starting in the early home, will roll on and up into the great eternity, blooming in all the joy, waving in all the triumph, exulting in all the song of heaven, or groaning in all the pain, and shrinking back into all the shame, and frowning in all the darkness of the great prison house. O, father! O, mother! in which direction is your influence tending?

I verily believe that three-fourths of the wickedness of the great city runs out rank and putrid from undisciplined homes. Sometimes I know there is an exception. From a bright, beautiful, cheerful Christian home a husband or a son will go off to die. How long you have had that boy in your prayer. He does not know the tears you have shed. He knows nothing about the sleepless nights you have passed about him. He started on the downward road, and will not stop, call you never so tenderly. O, it is hard, it is very hard, after having expended so much kindness and care to get such pay of ingratitude. There is many a young man, proud of his mother, who would strike into the dust the dastard who would dare to do her wrong, whose hand this morning, by his first step in sin, is sharpening a dagger to plunge through that mother's heart. I saw it. The telegram summoned him. I saw him come in scarred and bloated, to look upon the lifeless form of his mother—those grey locks pushed back over the wrinkled brow he had whitened by his waywardness. Those eyes had rained floods of tears over his iniquity. That still, white hand had written many a loving letter of counsel and invitation. He had broken that old heart. When he came in he threw himself on the coffin and sobbed outright and cried: "Mother! mother!" but the lips that kissed him in infancy and that had spoken so kindly on other days when he came home, spake not. They were sealed forever. Rather than such a memory in my soul, I would have rolled on me now the Alps and the Himalayas. "The eye that mocketh its father, and refuseth to obey its mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

The second caldron of iniquity to which I point you is an indolent life. There are young men coming to our city with industrious habits, and yet they see in the city a great many men who seem to get along without any work. They have no business, and yet they are better dressed than industrious men, and they seem to have more facilities of access to amusements. They have plenty of time to spare to hang around the engine house, or the Pierrepont House, or the Saint Nicholas, or the other beautiful hotels; or lounge around the City Hall, their hands in their pockets, a tooth-pick in their mouth, waiting for some crumb to fall from the office-holder's table; or gazing at the criminals as they come up in the morning from the station-houses, jeering at them as they leap from the city van to the Court House steps. Ah, I would as soon think of standing at the gate of Greenwood to enjoy a funeral as to stand at the City Hall in the morning, when the city van drives up, to look at the carcasses of men and women slain for both worlds. The industrious people see these idlers standing about, and they wonder how they make their living. I wonder, too. They have plenty of money for the ride; they have plenty of money to bet on the boat race or the horse race; they can discuss the flavor of the costliest wines; they they have the best seats at Booth's Theater. But still you ask me: "How do they get their money?" Well, my friends, there are four ways of getting money—just four. By inheritance; by earning it; by begging it; by stealing it. Now, there are many people in our community who seem to have plenty of money, who did not inherit it, and who did not earn it, and who did not beg it. You must take the responsibility of saying how they got it. There are men who get tired of the drudgery of life, and see these prosperous idlers; and they consort with them, and they learn the same tricks, and they go to the same ruin—at death their departure causing no more mourning than is felt for the fast horse that they foundered and killed by a too hasty watering at "Tunison's." O, the pressure on the industrious young men is tremendous when they see people all around them full of seeming success but doing nothing. The multitude of those who get their living by sleight of hand is multiplying. What is the use of working in the store, or office, or shop, or on the scaffold, or by the forge, when you can get your living by your wits? A merchant in New York was passing along the street one evening, and he saw one of his clerks, half disguised, going into one of the low theaters. He said within himself: "I must look out for that young man." One morning the merchant came to his store, and this clerk of whom I have been speaking came up, in assumed consternation, and said: "The store has been on fire. I have got it put out; but many of the goods are gone." The merchant instantly seized the young man by the collar, and said: "I have had enough of this. You can't deceive me. Where are the goods you stole?" And the clerk confessed it instantly. The young man had gone into the plan of making money by sleight of hand and by his wits.

You will get out of this world just so much as, under God, you earn by your own hand and brain. Horatius was told he might have so much land as he could plough around in one day with a yoke of oxen, and I have noticed that men get nothing in this world, that is worth possessing, of a financial, moral, or spiritual nature, save they get it by their own hard work. It is just so much as, from the morning to the evening of your life, you can plough around by your own continuous and hard-sweating industries. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise."

Another caldron of iniquity is the dram shop. Surely there is death in the pot. Anacharsis said that the vine had three grapes: pleasure, drunkenness, misery. Richard III. drowned his own brother Clarence in a butt of wine—these two incidents quite typical. Every saloon built above ground, or dug underground is a center of evil. It may be licensed, and for some time it may conduct its business in elegant style; but after awhile the cover will fall off, and you will see the iniquity in its right coloring. Plant a grog shop in the midst of the finest block of houses in your city, and the property will depreciate five, ten, twenty, thirty, fifty per cent. Men engaged in the ruinous traffic sometimes say: "You don't appreciate the fact that the largest revenues paid to the Government are by our business." Then I remember what Gladstone, the prime minister of England, said to a committee of men engaged in that traffic when they came to him to deplore that they were not treated with more consideration: "Gentlemen, don't be uneasy about the revenue. Give me thirty million sober people, and I will pay all the revenue, and have a large surplus." But, my friends, the ruin to property is a very small part of the evil. It takes everything that is sacred in the family, everything that is holy in religion, everything that is infinite in the soul, and tramples it into the mire.

The marriage day has come. The happy pair at the altar. The music sounds. The gay lights flash. The feet bound up and down the drawing-room. Started on a bright voyage of life. Sails all up. The wind is abaft. You prophesy everything beautiful. But the scene changes. A dingy garret. No fire. On a broken chair sits a sorrowing woman. Her last hope gone. Poor, disgraced, trodden underfoot—she knows the despair of being a drunkard's wife. The gay barque that danced off on the marriage morning has become a battered hulk, dismasted and shipwrecked. "O," she says, "he was as good a man as ever lived. He was so kind, he was so generous—no one better did God ever create than he; but the drink, the drink did it."

A young man starts from the country home for the city. Through the agency of metropolitan friends he has obtained a place in a store or a bank. That morning, in the farm house, the lights are kindled very early, and the boy's trunk is on the wagon. "I put a Bible in your trunk," says the mother, as she wipes the tears away with her apron. "My dear, I want you to read it when you get to town." "O," he says, "mother, don't you be worried about me. I know what I am about. I am old enough to take care of myself. Don't you be worried about me." The father says: "Be a good boy and write home often. Your mother will want to hear from you." Crack! goes the whip, and away over the hills goes the wagon. The scene changes. Five years after and there is a hearse coming up the old lane in front of the farm house. Killed in a porter house fight, that son has come home to disgrace the sepulchre of his fathers. When the old people lift the coffin lid, and see the changed face, and see the gash in the temples where the life oozed out, they will wring their withered hands and look up to heaven and cry: "*Cursed be rum!* CURSED BE RUM!"

Lorenzo de Medici was sick, and his friends thought that if they could dissolve some pearls in his cup, and then get him to swallow them, he would be cured. And so these valuable pearls were dissolved in his cup, and he drank them. What an expensive draught! But do you know that drunkenness puts into its cup the pearl of physical health, the pearl of domestic happiness, the pearl of earthly usefulness, the pearl of Christian hope, the pearl of an everlasting heaven, and then presses it to the lips? And oh, what an expensive draught! The dram shop is the gate of hell. While I speak there are some of you in the outer circles of this terrible maelstrom, and in the name of God I cry the alarm: "Put back now or never!" You say you are kind, and genial, and generous. I do not doubt it; but so much more the peril. Mean men never drink, unless some one else treats them. But the men who are in the front rank of this destructive habit are those who have a fine education, large hearts, genial natures and splendid prospects. This sin chooses the fattest lambs for sacrifice. What garlands of victory this carbuncled hand of drunkenness hath snatched from the brow of the orator and poet. What gleaming lights of generosity it has put out in midnight darkness. Come with me and look over—

come and hang over—look down into it while I lift off the cover, and you may see the loathsome, boiling seething, groaning, agonizing, blaspheming hell of the drunkard. There is everlasting death in the pot.

I have thought it might be appropriate at this season of the year, when we all mingle in hilarities, to warn our young friends not to put the cup of intoxication to their lips, and not to make these glorious seasons of family reunion and neighborhood congratulation the beginning of a long road of dissipation and sorrow. Young man! by the grace of God, be master of your appetites and passions. Frederick the Great, before he became "the Great," was seated with his roystering companions, and they were drinking, and hallooing, and almost imbecile, when word came to him that his father was dead, and consequently the crown was to pass to him. He rose up from among the boisterous crew, and stepped out and cried: "Stop your fooling; I am emperor!" Would to God that this day you might bring all your appetites and all your passions in subjection. "Better is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city." Be emperor! Yea, you are called this morning to be kings and to be priests unto God for ever. In the solemn hours of this closing year, and about to enter upon another year, if the Lord shall spare your lives for a few days longer, resolve that you will serve Him. Soon all the days and years of your life will have passed away, and then, the great eternity. "Rejoice, O, young man, in thy youth; let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk thou in the sight of thine own eyes, and in the way of thine own heart; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

CHAPTER X.

A CART-ROPE INIQUITY

"Woe unto them that sin as it were with a cart-rope."—Isaiah v: 18.

There are some iniquities that only nibble at the heart After a lifetime of their work, the man still stands upright, respected and honored. These vermin have not strength enough to gnaw through a man's character. But there are other transgressions that lift themselves up to gigantic proportions, and seize hold of a man and bind him with thongs for ever. There are some iniquities that have such great emphasis of evil that he who commits them may be said to sin as with a cart-rope. I suppose you know how they make a great rope. The stuff out of which it is fashioned is nothing but tow which you pull apart without any exertion of your fingers. This is spun into threads, any one of which you could easily snap, but a great many of these threads are interwound—then you have a rope strong enough to bind an ox, or hold a ship in a tempest. I speak to you of the sin of gambling. A cart-rope in strength is that sin, and yet I wish more especially to draw your attention to the small threads of influence out of which that mighty iniquity is twisted. This crime is on the advance, so that it is well not only that fathers, and brothers, and sons, be interested in such a discussion, but that wives, and mothers, and sisters, and daughters look out lest their present home be sacrificed, or their intended home be blasted. No man, no woman, can stand aloof from such a subject as this and say: "It has no practical bearing upon my life;" for there may be in a short time in your history an experience in which you will find that the discussion involved three worlds—earth, heaven, hell. There are in this cluster of cities about eight hundred confessed gambling establishments. There are about three thousand five hundred professional gamblers. Out of the eight hundred gambling establishments, how many of them do you suppose profess to be honest? Ten. These ten professing to be honest because they are merely the ante-chamber to the seven hundred and ninety that are acknowledged fraudulent. There are first-class gambling establishments. You step a little way out of Broadway. You go up the marble stairs. You ring the bell. The liveried servant introduces you. The walls are lavendar tinted. The mantles are of Vermont marble. The pictures are "Jephtha's Daughter," and Dore's "Dante's and Virgil's Frozen Region of Hell," a most appropriate selection, this last, for the place. There is the *roulette* table, the finest, costliest, most exquisite piece of furniture in the United States. There is the banqueting-room where, free of charge to the guests, you may find the plate, and viands, and wines, and cigars, sumptuous beyond parallel. Then you come to the second-class gambling-establishment. To it you are introduced by a card through some "roper in." Having entered, you must either gamble or fight. Sanded cards, dice loaded with quicksilver, poor drinks mixed with more poor drinks, will soon help you to get rid of all your money to a tune in short metre without staccato passages. You wanted to see. You saw. The low villains of that place watch you as you come in. Does not the panther, squat in the grass, know a calf when he sees it? Wrangle not for your rights in that place, or your body will be thrown bloody into the street, or dead into the East River.

You go along a little further and find the policy establishment. In that place you bet on numbers. Betting on two numbers is called a "saddle;" betting on three numbers is called a "gig;" betting on four numbers is called a "horse;" and there are thousands of our young men leaping into that "saddle," and mounting that "gig," and behind that "horse," riding to perdition. There is always one kind of sign on the door—"Exchange;" a most appropriate title for the door, for there, in that room, a man exchanges health, peace, and heaven, for loss of health, loss of home, loss of family, loss of immortal soul. Exchange sure enough and infinite enough.

Now you acknowledge that is a cart-rope of evil, but you want to know what are the small threads out of which it is made. There is, in many, a disposition to hazard. They feel a delight in walking near a precipice because of the sense of danger. There are people who go upon Jungfrau, not for the largeness of the prospect, but for the feeling that they have of thinking: "What would happen if I should fall off?" There are persons who have their blood filliped and accelerated by skating very near an air hole. There are men who find a positive delight in driving within two inches of the edge of a bridge. It is this disposition to hazard that finds development in gaming practices. Here are five hundred dollars. I may stake them. If I stake them I may lose them; but I may win five thousand dollars. Whichever way it turns, I have the excitement. Shuffle the cards. Lost! Heart thumps. Head dizzy. At it again—just to gratify this desire for *hazard.*

Then there are others who go into this sin through *sheer desire for gain.* It is especially so with professional gamblers. They always keep cool. They never drink enough to unbalance their judgment. They do not see the dice so much as they see the dollar beyond the dice, and for that they watch as the spider in the web, looking as if dead until the fly passes. Thousands of young men in the hope of gain go into these practices. They say: "Well, my salary is not enough to allow this luxuriance. I don't get enough from my store, office, or shop. I ought to have finer apartments. I ought to have better wines. I ought to have more richly flavored cigars. I ought to be able to entertain my friends more expensively. I wont stand this any longer. I can with one brilliant stroke make a fortune. Now, here goes, principle or no principle, heaven or hell. Who cares?" When a young man makes up his mind to live beyond his income, Satan has bought him out and out, and it is only a question of time when the goods are to be delivered. The thing is done. You may plant in the way all the batteries of truth and righteousness, that man is bound to go on. When a man makes one thousand dollars a year and spends one thousand two hundred dollars; when a young man makes one thousand five hundred dollars and spends one thousand seven hundred dollars, all the harpies of darkness cry out: "Ha! ha! we have him," and they have. How to get the extra five hundred dollars or the extra two thousand dollars is the question. He says: "Here is my friend who started out the other day with but little money, and in one night, so great was his luck, he rolled up hundreds and thousands of dollars. If he got it, why not I? It is such dull work, this adding up of long lines of figures in the counting-house; this pulling down of a hundred yards of goods and selling a remnant; this always waiting upon somebody else, when I could put one hundred dollars on the ace, and pick up a thousand." This sin works very insidiously.

Other sins sound the drum, and flaunt the flag, and gather their recruits with wild huzza, but this marches its procession of pale victims in dead of night, in silence, and when they drop into the grave there is not so much sound as the click of a dice. O, how many have gone down under it. Look at those men who were once highly prospered. Now, their forehead is licked by a tongue of flame that will never go out. In their souls are plunged the beaks that will never be lifted. Swing open the door of that man's heart and you see a coil of adders wriggling their indescribable horror until you turn away and hide your face and ask God to help you to forget it. The most of this evil is unadvertised. The community does not hear of it. Men defrauded in gaming establishments are not fools enough to tell of it. Once in a while, however, there is an exposure, as when in Boston the police swooped upon a gaming establishment and found in it the representatives of all classes of citizens, from the first merchants on State street to the low Ann street gambler; as when Bullock, the cashier of the Central Railroad of Georgia, was found to have stolen one hundred and three thousand dollars for the purpose of carrying on gaming practices; as when a young man in one of the savings' banks of Brooklyn, many years ago, was found to have stolen forty thousand dollars to carry on gaming practices; as when a man connected with a Wall street insurance company was found to have stolen one hundred and eighty thousand dollars to carry on his gaming practices. But that is exceptional. Generally the money leaks silently from the merchant's till into the gamester's wallet. I believe that one of the main pipes leading to this sewer of iniquity is the excitement of business life. It is not a significant fact that the majority of the day gambling-houses in New York are in proximity to Wall street? Men go into the excitement of stock gambling, and from that they plunge into the gambling-houses, as, when men are intoxicated, they go into a liquor saloon to get more drink. The howling, screaming, stamping, Bedlamitish crew in the "Gold Room" drop into the gaming-houses to keep up their frenzy. The agitation that is witnessed in the stock market when the chair announces the word "North-western," or "Fort Wayne," or "Rock Island," or "New York Central," and the rat! tat! tat! of the auctioneer's hammer, and the excitement of making "corners," and getting up "pools," and "carrying stock," and a "break" from eighty to seventy, and the excitement of rushing about in curb-stone brokerage, and the sudden cries of "Buyer three!" "Buyer ten!" "Take 'em!" "How many?" and the making or losing of ten thousand dollars by one operation, unfits a man to go home, and so he goes up the flight of stairs, amid business offices, to the darkly-curtained, wooden-shuttered room, gaily furnished inside, and takes his place at the *roulette* or the faro table. But I cannot tell all the process by which men get into this evil. One man came to our city of New York. He was a Western merchant. He went into a gaming-house on Park-place. Before morning he had lost all his money save one dollar, and he moved around about with that dollar in his hand, and after awhile, caught still more powerfully under the infernal infatuation, he came up and put down the dollar and cried out until they heard him through the saloon: "One thousand miles from home, and my last dollar on the gaming table."

Says some young man here this morning: "That cart-rope has never been wound around my soul." My brother, have not some threads of that cart-rope been twisted until after awhile they may become strong enough to bind you for ever?

I arraign before God the gift enterprises of our cities, which have a tendency to make this a nation of gamblers. Whatever you get, young man, in such a place as that, without giving a proper equivalent, is a robbery of your own soul, and a robbery of the community. Yet, how we are appalled to see men who have failed in other enterprises go into gift concerts, where the chief attraction is not music, but the prizes distributed among the audience; or to sell books where the chief attraction is not the book, but the package that goes with the book. Tobacco dealers advertise that on a certain day they will put money into their papers, so that the purchaser of this tobacco in Cincinnati or New York may unexpectedly come upon a magnificent gratuity. Boys hawking through the cars packages containing nobody knows what, until you open them and find they contain nothing. Christian men with pictures on their wall gotten in a lottery, and the brain of community taxed to find out some new way of getting things without paying for them. O, young men, these are the threads that make the cart rope, and when a young man consents to these practices, he is being bound hand and foot by a habit which has already destroyed "a great multitude that no man can number." Sometimes these gift enterprises are carried on in the name of charity; and you remember at the close of the late war how many gift enterprises were on foot, the proceeds to go to the orphans and the widows of the soldiers and sailors. What did the men who had charge of those gift enterprises care for the orphans and the widows? Why, they would have allowed them to freeze to death upon their steps. I have no faith in a charity which, for the sake of relieving present suffering, opens a gaping jaw that has swallowed down so much of the virtue and good principle of community. Young man, have nothing to do with these things. They only sharpen your appetite for games of chance. Do one of two things: be honest or die.

I have accomplished my object if I put the men in my audience on the look out. It is a great deal easier to fall than it is to get up again. The trouble is that when men begin to go astray from the path of duty, they are apt to say, "There's no use of my trying to get back. I've sacrificed my respectability, I can't return;" and they go on until they are utterly destroyed. I tell you, my friends, that God this moment, by His Holy Spirit, can change your entire nature, so that you will go out of this Tabernacle a far different man from what you were when you came in. Your great want—what is it? More salary? Higher social position? No; no. I will tell you the great want of every man in this house, if he has not already obtained it. It is the grace of God. Are there any here who have fallen victims to the sin that I have been reprehending? You are in a prison. You rush against the wall of this prison, and try to get out, and you fail; and you turn around and dash against the other wall until there is blood on the grates, and blood on your soul. You will never get out in this way. There is only one way of getting out. There is a key that can unlock that prison-house. It is the key of the house of David. It is the key that Christ wears at His girdle. If you will allow Him this morning to put that key to the lock, the bolt will shoot back, and the door will swing open, and you will be a free man in Christ Jesus. O, prodigal, what a business this is for you, feeding swine, when your father stands in the front door, straining his eyesight to catch the first glimpse of your return; and the calf is as fat as it will be, and the harps of heaven are all strung, and the feet free. There are converted gamblers in heaven. The light of eternity flashed upon the green baize of their billiard-saloon. In the laver of God's forgiveness they washed off all their sin. They quit trying for earthly stakes. They tried for heaven and won it. There stretches a hand from heaven toward the head of the worst man in all this audience. It is a hand, not clenched as if to smite, but outspread as if to drop a benediction. Other seas have a shore and may be fathomed, but the sea of God's love —eternity, has no plummet to strike the bottom, and immensity no iron-bound shore to confine it. Its tides are lifted by the heart of infinite compassion. Its waves are the hosannahs of the redeemed. The argosies that sail on it drop anchor at last amid the thundering salvo of eternal victory. But alas for that man who sits down to the final game of life and puts his immortal soul on the ace, while the angels of God keep the tally-board; and after the kings and queens, and knaves, and spades, are "shuffled" and "cut," and the game is ended, hovering and impending worlds discover that he has lost it, the faro-bank of eternal darkness clutching down into its wallet all the blood-stained wagers.

CHAPTER XI.

THE WOMAN OF PLEASURE.

She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.—I. Tim. v: 6.

It is a strong way of putting the truth, that a woman who seeks in worldly advantage her chief enjoyment, will come to disappointment and death.

My friends, you all want to be happy. You have had a great many recipes by which it is proposed to give you satisfaction—solid satisfaction. At times you feel a thorough unrest. You know as well as older people what it is to be depressed. As dark shadows sometimes fall upon the geography of the school-girl as on the page of the spectacled philosopher. I have seen as cloudy days in May as in November. There are no deeper sighs breathed by the grandmother than by the granddaughter. I correct the popular impression that people are happier in childhood and youth than they ever will be again. If we live aright, the older we are the happier. The happiest woman that I ever knew was a Christian octogenarian; her hair white as white could be; the sunlight of heaven late in the afternoon gilding the peaks of snow. I have to say to a great many of the young people of this church that the most miserable time you are ever to have is just now. As you advance in life, as you come out into the world and have your head and heart all full of good, honest, practical, Christian work, then you will know what it is to begin to be happy. There are those who would have us believe that life is chasing thistle-down and grasping bubbles. We have not found it so. To many of us it has been discovering diamonds larger than the Kohinoor, and I think that our joy will continue to increase until nothing short of the everlasting jubilee of heaven will be able to express it.

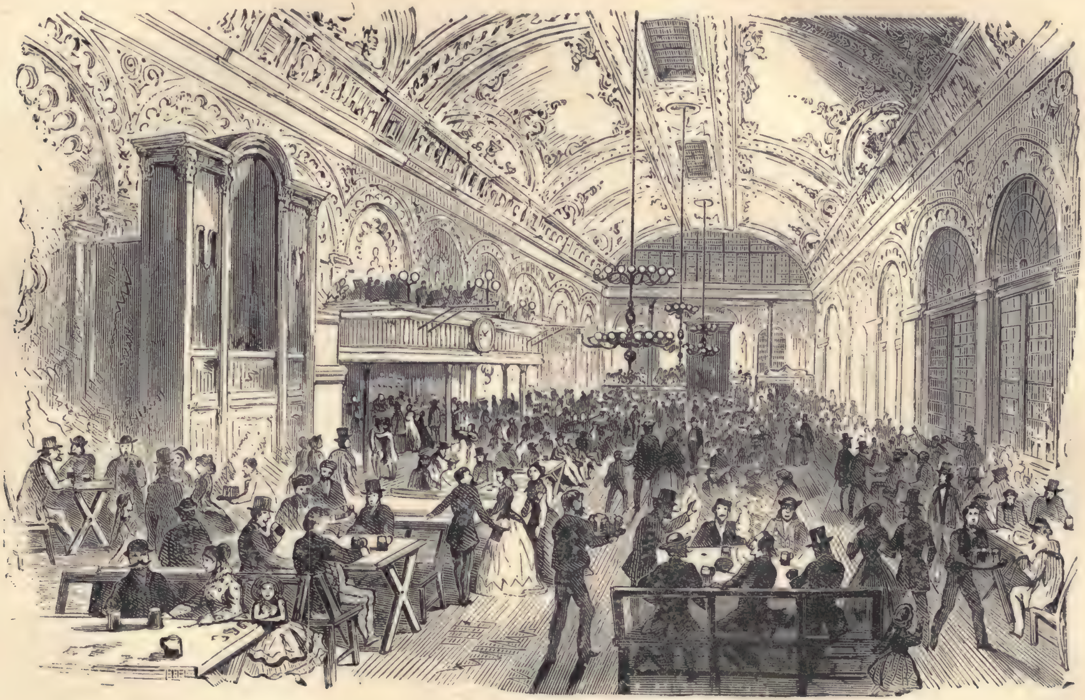
Horatio Greenough, at the close of the hardest life a man ever lives—the life of an American artist—wrote: "I don't want to leave this world until I give some sign that, born by the grace of God in this land, I have found life to be a very cheerful thing, and not the dark and bitter thing with which my early prospects were clouded."

Albert Barnes, the good Christian, known the world over, stood in his pulpit in Philadelphia, at seventy or eighty years of age, and said: "This world is so very attractive to me, I am very sorry I shall have to leave it."

I know that Solomon said some very dolorous things about this world, and three times declared: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." I suppose it was a reference to those times in his career when his seven hundred wives almost pestered the life out of him! But I would rather turn to the description he has given of religion, when he says in another place: "Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." It is reasonable to expect it will be so. The longer the fruit hangs on the tree, the riper and more mellow it ought to grow. You plant one grain of corn, and it will send up a stalk with two ears, each having nine hundred and fifty grains, so that one grain planted will produce nineteen hundred grains. And ought not the implantation of a grain of Christian principle in a youthful soul develop into a large crop of gladness on earth and to a harvest of eternal joy in heaven? Hear me, then, this morning, while I discourse upon some of the mistakes which young people make in regard to happiness, and point out to the young women of this church what I consider to be the sources of complete satisfaction.

And, in the first place, I advise you *not to build your happiness upon mere social position.* Persons at your age, looking off upon life, are apt to think that, if, by some stroke of what is called good-luck, you could arrive in an elevated and affluent position, a little higher than that in which God has called you to live, you would be completely happy. Infinite mistake! The palace floor of Ahasuerus is red with the blood of Vashti's broken heart. There have been no more scalding tears wept than those which coursed the cheeks of Josephine. If the sobs of unhappy womanhood in the great cities could break through the tapestried wall, that sob would come along your streets to-day like the simoon of the desert. Sometimes I have heard in the rustling of the robes on the city pavement the hiss of the adders that followed in the wake. You have come out from your home, and you have looked up at the great house, and covet a life under those arches, when, perhaps, at that very moment, within that house, there may have been the wringing of hands, the start of horror, and the very agony of hell. I knew such an one. Her father's house was plain, most of the people who came there were plain; but, by a change in fortune such as sometimes comes, a hand had been offered that led her into a brilliant sphere. All the neighbors congratulated her upon her grand prospects; but what an exchange! On her side it was a heart full of generous impulse and affection. On his side it was a soul dry and withered as the stubble of the field. On her side it was a father's house, where God was honored and the Sabbath light flooded the rooms with the very mirth of heaven. On his side it was a gorgeous residence, and the coming of mighty men to be entertained there; but within it were revelry and godlessness. Hardly had the orange blossoms of the marriage feast lost their fragrance, than the night of discontent began to cast here and there its shadow. The ring on the finger was only one link of an iron chain that was to bind her eternally captive. Cruelties and unkindness changed all those splendid trappings into a hollow mockery. The platters of solid silver, the caskets of pure gold, the head-dress of gleaming diamonds, were there; but no God, no peace, no kind words, no Christian sympathy. The festive music that broke on the captive's ear turned out to be a dirge, and the wreath in the plush was a reptile coil, and the upholstery that swayed in the wind was the wing of a destroying angel, and the bead-drops on the pitcher were the sweat of everlasting despair. O, how many rivalries and unhappinesses among those who seek in social life their chief happiness! It matters not how fine you have things; there are other people who have it finer. Taking out your watch to tell the hour of day, some one will correct your time-piece by pulling out a watch more richly chased and jeweled. Ride in a carriage that cost you eight hundred dollars, and before you get around the park you will meet with one that cost two thousand dollars. Have on your wall a picture by Copley, and before night you will hear of some one who has a picture fresh from the studio of Church or Bierstadt. All that this world can do for you in ribbons, in silver, in gold, in Axminster plush, in Gobelin tapestry, in wide halls, in lordly acquaintanceship, will not give you the ten-thousandth part of a grain of solid satisfaction. The English lord, moving in the very highest sphere, was one day found seated, with his chin on his hand, and his elbow on the window-sill, looking out, and saying: "O, I wish I could exchange places with that dog." Mere social position will never give happiness to a woman's soul. I have walked through the halls of those who despise the common people; I have sat at their banquets; I have had their friendship; yea, I have heard from their own lips the story of their disquietude; and I tell the young women of this church that they who build on mere social position their soul's immortal happiness, are building on the sand.

I go further, and advise you *not to depend for enjoyment upon mere personal attractions.* It would be sheer hypocrisy, because we may not have it ourselves, to despise, or affect to despise, beauty in others. When God gives it, He gives it as a blessing and as a means of usefulness. David and his army were coming down from the mountains to destroy Nabal and his flocks and vineyards. The beautiful Abigail, the wife of Nabal, went out to arrest him when he came down from the mountains, and she succeeded. Coming to the foot of the hill, she knelt. David with his army of sworn men came down over the cliffs, and when he saw her kneeling at the foot of the hill, he cried: "Halt!" to his men, and the caves echoed it: "Halt! halt!" That one beautiful woman kneeling at the foot of the cliff had arrested all those armed troops. A dew-drop dashed back Niagara. The Bible sets before us the portraits of Sarah and Rebecca, and Abishag, Absalom's sister, and Job's daughters, and says: "They were fair to look upon." By out-door exercise, and by skillful arrangement of apparel, let women make themselves attractive. The sloven has only one mission, and that to excite our loathing and disgust. But alas! for those who depend upon personal charms for their happiness. Beauty is such a subtle thing, it does not seem to depend upon facial propor-



MUSIC HALL AND BEER GARDEN.

tions, or upon the sparkle of the eye, or upon the flush of the cheek. You sometimes find it among irregular features. It is the soul shining through the face that makes one beautiful. But alas! for those who depend upon mere personal charms. They will come to disappointment and to a great fret. There are so many different opinions about what are personal charms; and then sickness, and trouble, and age, do make such ravages. The poorest god that a woman ever worships is her own face. The saddest sight in all the world is a woman who has built everything on good looks, when the charms begin to vanish. O, how they try to cover the wrinkles and hide the ravages of time! When Time, with iron-shod feet, steps on a face, the hoof-marks remain, and you cannot hide them. It is silly to try to hide them. I think the most repulsive fool in all the world is an old fool!

Why, my friends, should you be ashamed to be getting old? It is a sign—it is *prima facie* evidence, that you have behaved tolerably well or you would not have lived to this time. The grandest thing, I think, is eternity, and that is made up of countless years. When the Bible would set forth the attractiveness of Jesus Christ, it says: "His hair was white as snow." But when the color goes from the cheek, and the lustre from the eye, and the spring from the step, and the gracefulness from the gait, alas! for those who have built their time and their eternity upon good looks. But all the passage of years cannot take out of one's face benignity, and kindness, and compassion, and faith. Culture your heart and you culture your face. The brightest glory that ever beamed from a woman's face is the religion of Jesus Christ. In the last war two hundred wounded soldiers came to Philadelphia one night, and came unheralded, and they had to extemporize a hospital for them, and the Christian women of my church, and of other churches, went out that night to take care of the poor wounded fellows. That night I saw a Christian woman go through the wards of the hospital, her sleeves rolled up, ready for hard work, her hair dishevelled in the excitement of the hour. Her face was plain, very plain; but after the wounds were washed and the new bandages were put round the splintered limbs, and the exhausted boy fell off into his first pleasant sleep, she put her hand on his brow, and he started in his dream, and said: "O, I thought an angel touched me!" There may have been no classic elegance in the features of Mrs. Harris, who came into the hospital after the "Seven Days" awful fight before Richmond, as she sat down by a wounded drummer-boy and heard him soliloquize: "A ball through my body, and my poor mother will never again see her boy. What a pity it is!" And she leaned over him and said: "Shall I be your mother, and comfort you?" And he looked up and said: "Yes, I'll try to think she's here. Please to write a long letter to her, and tell her all about it, and send her a lock of my hair and comfort her. But I would like to have you tell her how much I suffered—yes, I would like you to do that, for she would feel so for me. Hold my hand while I die." There may have been no classic elegance in her features, but all the hospitals of Harrison's Landing and Fortress Monroe would have agreed that she was beautiful; and if any rough man in all that ward had insulted her, some wounded soldier would have leaped from his couch, on his best foot, and struck him dead with a crutch.

Again: I advise you *not to depend for happiness upon the flatteries of men.* It is a poor compliment tc your sex that so many men feel obliged in your presence to offer unmeaning compliments. Men capable of elegant and elaborate conversation elsewhere sometimes feel called upon at the door of the drawing-room to drop their common sense and to dole out sickening flatteries. They say things about your dress, and about your appearance, that you know, and they know, are false. They say you are an angel. You know you are not. Determined to tell the truth in office, and store, and shop, they consider it honorable to lie to a woman. The same thing that they told you on this side of the drawing-room, three minutes ago they said to some on the other side of the drawing-room. O, let no one trample on your self-respect. The meanest thing on which a woman can build her happiness is the flatteries of men.

Again: I charge you *not to depend for happiness upon the discipleship of fashion.* Some men are just as proud of being out of the fashion as others are of being in it. I have seen men as vain of their old fashioned coat, and their eccentric hat, as your brainless fop is proud of his dangling fooleries. Fashion sometimes makes a reasonable demand of us, and then we ought to yield to it. The daisies of the field have their fashion of color and leaf; the honeysuckles have their fashion of ear-drop; and the snowflakes flung out of the winter heavens have their fashion of exquisiteness. After the summer shower the sky weds the earth with ring of rainbow. And I do not think we have a right to despise all the elegancies and fashions of this world, especially if they make reasonable demands upon us; but the discipleship and worship of fashion is death to the body, and death to the soul. I am glad the world is improving. Look at the fashion plates of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and you will find that the world is not so extravagant and extraordinary now as it was then, and all the marvellous things that the granddaughter will do will never equal that done by the grandmother. Go still further back to the Bible times, and you find that in those times fashion wielded a more terrible scepter. You have only to turn to the third chapter of Isaiah.

Only think of a woman having all that on! I am glad that the world is getting better, and that fashion which has dominated in the world so ruinously in other days has for a little time, for a little degree at any rate, relaxed its energies. Oh, the danger of the discipleship of fashion. All the splendors and the extravaganza of this world dyed into your robe and flung over your shoulder cannot wrap peace around your heart for a single moment. The gayest wardrobe will utter no voice of condolence in the day of trouble and darkness. That woman is grandly dressed, and only she, who is wrapped in the robe of a Savior's righteousness. The home may be very humble, the hat may be very plain, the frock may be very coarse; but the halo of heaven settles in the room when she wears it, and the faintest touch of the resurrection angel will change that garment into raiment exceeding white, so as no fuller on earth could whiten it. I come to you, young woman, to-day, to say that this world cannot make you happy. I know it is a bright world, with glorious sunshine, and golden rivers, and fire-worked sunset, and bird orchestra, and the darkest cave has its crystals, and the wrathiest wave its foam-wreath, and the coldest midnight its flaming aurora; but God will put out all these lights with the blast of his own nostrils, and the glories of this world will perish in the final conflagration. You will never be happy until you get your sins forgiven and allow Christ Jesus to take full possession of your soul. He will be your friend in every perplexity. He will be your comfort in every trial. He will be your defender in every strait. I do not ask you to bring, like Mary, the spices to the sepulcher of a dead Christ, but to bring your all to the feet of a living Jesus. His word is peace. His look is love. His hand is help. His touch is life. His smile is heaven. Oh, come, then, in flocks and groups! Come, like the south wind over banks of myrrh. Come, like the morning light tripping over the mountains. Wreathe all your affections for Christ's brow, set all your gems in Christ's coronet, pour all your voices into Christ's song, and let this Sabbath air rustle with the wings of rejoicing angels, and the towers of God ring out the news of souls saved!

"This world its fancied pearl may crave,
'Tis not the pearl for me;
'Twill dim its luster in the grave
'Twill perish in the sea.
But there's a pearl of price untold,
Which never can be bought with gold;
Oh, that's the pearl for me."

CHAPTER XII.

THE SINS OF SUMMER WATERING PLACES.

A pool, which is called in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a multitude of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water.—John v: 2, 3.

Outside of the city of Jerusalem, there was a sensitive watering-place, the popular resort for invalids. To this day, there is a dry basin of rock which shows that there must have been a pool there three hundred and sixty feet long, one hundred and thirty feet wide, and seventy-five feet deep. This pool was surrounded by five piazzas, or porches, or bathing-houses, where the patients tarried until the time when they were to step into the water. So far as reinvigoration was concerned, it must have been a Saratoga and a Long Branch on a small scale; a Leamington and a Brighton combined—medical and therapeutic. Tradition says that at a certain season of the year there was an officer of the government who would go down to that water and pour in it some healing quality, and after that the people would come and get the medication; but I prefer the plain statement of Scripture, that at a certain season, an angel came down and stirred up or troubled the water; and then the people came and got the healing. That angel of God that stirred up the Judean watering-place had his counterpart in the angel of healing that, in our day, steps into the mineral waters of Congress, or Sharon, or Sulphur Springs, or into the salt sea at Cape May and Nahant, where multitudes who are worn out with commercial and professional anxieties, as well as those who are afflicted with rheumatic, neuralgic, and splenetic diseases, go, and are cured by the thousands. These Bethesdas are scattered all up and down our country, blessed be God!

We are at a season of the year when railway trains are being laden with passengers and baggage on their way to the mountains, and the lakes, and the sea-shore. Multitudes of our citizens are packing their trunks for a restorative absence. The city heats are pursuing the people with torch and fear of sunstroke. The long silent halls of sumptuous hotels are all abuzz with excited arrivals. The crystalline surface of Winnipiseogee is shattered with the stroke of steamers laden with excursionists. The antlers of Adirondack deer rattle under the shot of city sportsmen. The trout make fatal snap at the hook of adroit sportsmen, and toss their spotted brilliance into the game basket. Soon the baton of the orchestral leader will tap the music-stand on the hotel green, and American life will put on festal array, and the rumbling of the tenpin alley, and the crack of the ivory balls on the green-baized billiard tables, and the jolting of the bar-room goblets, and the explosive uncorking of champagne bottles, and the whirl and the rustle of the ball-room dance, and the clattering hoofs of the race-courses, will attest that the season for the great American watering-places is fairly inaugurated. Music! Flute, and drum, and cornet-a-piston, and clapping cymbals, will wake the echoes of the mountains. Glad I am that fagged-out American life, for the most part, will have an opportunity to rest, and that nerves racked and destroyed will find a Bethesda.

I believe in watering-places. I go there sometimes. Let not the commercial firm begrudge the clerk, or the employer the journeyman, or the patient the physician, or the church its pastor, a season of inoccupation. Luther used to sport with his children; Edmund Burke used to caress his favorite horse; Thomas Chalmers, in the dark hour of the Church's disruption, played kite for recreation—so I was told by his own daughter—and the busy Christ said to the busy apostles: "Come ye apart awhile into the desert, and rest yourselves." And I have observed that they who do not know how to rest, do not know how to work.

But I have to declare this truth to-day, that some of our fashionable watering-places are the temporal and eternal destruction of "a multitude that no man can number;" and amid the congratulations of this season, and the prospect of the departure of many of you for the country, I must utter a note of warning, plain, earnest, and unmistakable. The first temptation that is apt to hover in this direction, is *to leave your piety all at home.* You will send the dog, and cat, and canary-bird to be well cared for somewhere else; but the temptation will be to leave your religion in the room with the blinds down and the door bolted, and then you will come back in the autumn to find that it is starved and suffocated, lying stretched on the rug, stark dead. There is no surplus of piety at the watering-places. I never knew any one to grow very rapidly in grace at the Catskill Mountain House, or Sharon Springs, or the Falls of Montmorency. It is generally the case that the Sabbath is more of a carousal than any other day, and there are Sunday walks, and Sunday rides, and Sunday excursions. Elders, and deacons, and ministers of religion, who are entirely consistent at home, sometimes when the Sabbath dawns on them at Niagara Falls, or the White Mountains, take the day to themselves. If they go to the church, it is apt to be a sacred parade, and the discourse, instead of being a plain talk about the soul, is apt to be what is called a crack sermon —that is, some discourse picked out of the effusions of the year as the one most adapted to excite admiration; and in those churches, from the way the ladies hold their fans, you know that they are not so much impressed with the heat as with the picturesqueness of half disclosed features. Four puny souls stand in the organ loft and squall a tune that nobody knows, and worshippers, with two thousand dollars worth of diamonds on the right hand, drop a cent into the poor-box, and then the benediction is pronounced, and the farce is ended. The toughest thing I ever tried to do was to be good at a watering.place.

The air is bewitched with the "world, the flesh, and devil." There are Christians who, in three or four weeks in such a place, have had such terrible rents made in their Christian robe, that they had to keep darning it until Christmas to get it mended! The health of a great many people makes an annual visit to some mineral spring an absolute necessity; but, my dear people, take your Bible along with you, and take an hour for secret prayer every day, though you be surrounded by guffaw and saturnalia. Keep holy the Sabbath, though they deride you as a bigoted Puritan. Stand off from John Morrissey's gambling hell, and those other institutions which propose to imitate on this side the water the iniquities of Baden-Baden. Let your moral and your immortal health keep pace with your physical recuperation and remember that all the waters of Hathorne, and sulphur and chalybeate springs cannot do you so much good as the mineral, healing, perrennial flood that breaks forth from the "Rock of Ages." This may be your last summer. If so, make it a fit vestibule of heaven.

Another temptation, however, around nearly all our watering-places, is *the horse-racing business.* We all admire the horse; but we do not think that its beauty, or speed, ought to be cultured at the expense of human degradation. The horse-race is not of such importance as the human race. The Bible intimates that a man is better than a sheep, and I suppose he is better than a horse, though, like Job's stallion, his neck be clothed with thunder.

Horse-races in olden times were under the ban of Christian people; and in our day the same institution has come up under fictitious names. And it is called a "Summer Meeting," almost suggestive of positive religious exercises. And it is called an "Agricultural Fair," suggestive of everything that is improving in the art of farming. But under these deceptive titles are the same cheating, and the same betting, and the same drunkenness, and the same vagabondage, and the same abominations that were to be found under the old horse-racing system. I never knew a man yet who could give himself to the pleasures of the turf for a long reach of time and not be battered in morals. They hook up their spanking team, and put on their sporting cap, and light their cigar, and take the reins, and dash down the road to perdition! The great day at Saratoga and Long Branch, and Cape May, and nearly all the other watering-places, is the day of the races. The hotels are thronged, every kind of equipage is taken up at an almost fabulous price; and there are many respectable people mingling with jockies and gamblers, and libertines, and foul-mouthed men and flashy women. The bar-tender stirs up the brandy smash. The bets run high. The greenhorns, supposing all is fair, put in their money, soon enough to lose it. Three weeks before the race takes place the struggle is decided, and the men in the secret know on which steed to bet their money. The two men on the horses riding around, long before arranged who shall beat. Leaning from the stand or from the carriage, are men and women so absorbed in the struggle of bone and muscle, and mettle, that they make a grand harvest for the pickpockets who carry off the pocket-books and portmonnaies. Men looking on see only two horses with two riders flying around the ring; but there is many a man on that stand whose honor, and domestic happiness, and fortune—white mane, white foot, white flank—are in the ring, racing with inebriety, and with fraud, and with profanity, and with ruin—black neck, black foot, black flank. Neck and neck, they go in that moral Epsom. White horse of honor; black horse of ruin. Death says: "I will bet on the black horse." Spectator says: "I will bet on the white horse." The white horse of honor a little way ahead. The black horse of ruin, Satan mounted, all the time gaining on him. Spectator breathless. Put on the lash. Dig in the spurs. There! They are past the stand. Sure. Just as I expected it. The black horse of ruin has won the race, and all the galleries of darkness "huzza! huzza!" and the devils come in to pick up their wagers. Ah, my friends, have nothing to do with horse-racing dissipations this summer. Long ago the English government got through looking to the turf for the dragoon and light cavalry horse. They found the turf depreciates the stock; and it is yet worse for men. Thomas Hughes, the member of Parliament, and the author known all the world over, hearing that a new turf enterprise was being started in this country, wrote a letter in which he said: "Heaven help you, then; for of all the cankers of our old civilization, there is nothing in this country approaching in unblushing meanness, in rascality holding its head high, to this belauded institution of the British turf." Another famous sportsman writes: "How many fine domains have been shared among these hosts of rapacious sharks during the last two hundred years; and unless the system be altered, how many more are doomed to fall into the same gulf!" The Duke of Hamilton, through his horse-racing proclivities, in three years got through his entire fortune of £70,000; and I will say that some of you are being undermined by it. With the bull-fights of Spain and the bear-baitings of the pit, may the Lord God annihilate the infamous and accursed horse-racing of England and America.

I go further and speak of another temptation that hovers over the watering place; and this is the *temptation to sacrifice physical strength.* The modern Bethesda, just like this Bethesda of the text, was intended to recuperate the physical health; and yet how many come from the watering-places, their health absolutely destroyed.

New York and Brooklyn idiots, boasting of having imbibed twenty glasses of congress water before breakfast. Families accustomed to going to bed at ten o'clock at night, gossiping until one or two o'clock in the morning. Dyspeptics, usually very cautious about their health, mingling ice-creams, and lemons, and lobster-salads, and cocoanuts until the gastric juices lift up all their voices of lamentation and protest. Delicate women and brainless young men chassezing themselves into vertigo and catalepsy. Thousands of men and women coming back from our watering-places in the autumn with the foundations laid for ailments that will last them all their life long. You know as well as I do that this is the simple truth. In the summer, you say to your good health: "Good-by; I am going to have a good time for a little while; I will be very glad to see you again in the autumn." Then in the autumn, when you are hard at work in your office, or store, or shop, or counting-room, Good Health will come in and say: "Good-by; I am going." You say: "Where are you going?" "O!" says Good Health, "I am going to take a vacation." It is a poor rule that will not work both ways, and your good health will leave you choleric, and splenetic, and exhausted. You coquetted with your good health in the summer-time, and your good health is coquetting with you in the winter-time. A fragment of Paul's charge to the jailer would be an appropriate inscription for the hotel register in every watering-place: "Do thyself no harm."

Another temptation hovering around the watering-place is to *the formation of hasty and life-long alliances.* The watering-places are responsible for more of the domestic infelicities of this country than all other things combined. Society is so artificial there that no sure judgment of character can be formed. They who form companionships amid such circumstances, go into a lottery where there are twenty blanks to one prize. In the severe tug of life you want more than glitter and splash. Life is not a ball-room, where the music decides the step, and bow, and prance, and graceful swing of long trail can make up for strong common sense. You might as well go among the gaily-painted yachts of a summer regatta to find war vessels, as to go among the light spray of the summer watering-place to find character that can stand the test of the great struggle of human life. Ah, in the battle of life you want a stronger weapon than a lace fan or a croquet mallet! The load of life is so heavy that in order to draw it you want a team stronger than one made up of a masculine grasshopper and a feminine butterfly. If there is any man in the community that excites my contempt, and that ought to excite the contempt of every man and woman, it is the soft-handed, soft-headed fop, who, perfumed until the air is actually sick, spends his summer in taking killing attitudes, and waving sentimental adieus, and talking infinitesimal nothings, and finding his heaven in the set of a lavender kid-glove. Boots as tight as an inquisition. Two hours of consummate skill exhibited in the tie of a flaming cravat. His conversation made up of "Ahs!" and "Ohs!" and "He-hes!" It would take five hundred of them stewed down to make a teaspoonful of calf's-foot jelly. There is only one counterpart to such a man as that, and that is the frothy young woman at the watering-place; her conversation made up of French moonshine; what she has on her head only equalled by what she has on her back; useless ever since she was born, and to be useless until she is dead; and what they will do with her in the next world I do not know, except to set her up on the banks of the River of Life, for eternity, to look sweet! God intends us to admire music, and fair faces and graceful step; but amid the heartlessness, and the inflation and the fantastic influences of our modern watering-places, beware how you make life-long covenants.

Another temptation that will hover over the watering-place is that to *baneful literature.* Almost everyone starting off for the summer takes some reading matter. It is a book out of the library, or off the bookstand, or bought of the boy hawking books through the cars. I really believe there is more pestiferous trash read among the intelligent classes in July and August than in all the other ten months of the year Men and women who at home would not be satisfied with a book that was not really sensible, I found sitting on hotel piazza, or under the trees, reading books, the index of which would make them blush if they knew that you knew what the book was. "O," they say, "you must have intellectual recreation." Yes. There is no need that you take along into a watering-place, "Hamilton's Metaphysics," or some thunderous discourse on the eternal decrees, or "Faraday's Philosophy." There are many easy books that are good. You might as well say: "I propose now to give a little rest to my digestive organs, and instead of eating heavy meat and vegetables, I will, for a little while, take lighter food—a little strychnine and a few grains of ratsbane." Literary poison in August is as bad as literary poison in December. Mark that. Do not let the frogs and the lice of a corrupt printing-press jump and crawl into your Saratoga trunk or White Mountain valise. Would it not be an awful thing for you to be struck with lightning some day when you had in your hand one of these paper-covered romances—the hero a Parisian *roue*, the heroine an unprincipled flirt—chapters in the book that you would not read to your children at the rate of a hundred dollars a line. Throw out all that stuff from your summer baggage. Are there not good books that are easy to read—books of entertaining travel; books of congenial history; books of pure fun; books of poetry, ringing with merry canto; books of fine engraving; books that will rest the mind as well as purify the heart and elevate the whole life? My hearers, there will not be an hour between this and the day of your death when you can afford to read a book lacking in moral principle.

Another temptation hovering all around our watering-places, is to *intoxicating beverage.* I am told that it is becoming more and more fashionable for women to drink; and it is not very long ago that a lady of great respectability, in this city, having taken two glasses of wine away from home, became violent, and her friends, ashamed, forsook her, and she was carried to a police station, and afterward to her disgraced home. I care not how well a woman may dress, if she has taken enough of wine to flush her cheek and put a glassiness on her eye, she is intoxicated. She may be handed into a 2500 dollar carriage, and have diamonds enough to confound the Tiffany's—she is intoxicated. She may be a graduate of Packer Institute, and the daughter of some man in danger of being nominated for the Presidency—she is drunk. You may have a larger vocabulary than I have, and you may say in regard to her that she is "convivial," or she is "merry," or she is "festive," or she is "exhilarated;" but you cannot, with all your garlands of verbiage, cover up the plain fact that it is an old-fashioned case of drunk. Now the watering-places are full of temptations to men and women to tipple. At the close of the tenpin or billiard game, they tipple. At the close of the cotillion, they tipple. Seated on the piazza cooling themselves off, they tipple. The tinged glasses come around with bright straws, and they tipple. First, they take "light wines" as they call them; but "light wines," are heavy enough to debase the appetite. There is not a very long road between champagne at five dollars a bottle and whisky at five cents a glass. Satan has three or four grades down which he takes men to destruction. One man he takes up, and through one spree pitches him into eternal darkness. That is a rare case. Very seldom, indeed, can you find a man who will be such a fool as that. Satan will take another man to a grade, to a descent at an angle about like the Pennsylvania coal-shute, or the Mount Washington rail track, and shove him off. But that is very rare. When a man goes down to destruction, Satan brings him to a plane. It is almost a level. The depression is so slight that you can hardly see it. The man does not actually know that he is on the down grade, and it tips only a little toward darkness—just a little. And the first mile it is claret, and the second mile it is sherry, and the third mile it is punch, and the fourth mile it is ale, and the fifth mile it is porter, and the sixth mile it is brandy, and then it gets steeper, and steeper, and steeper, and the man gets frightened, and says: "O, let me get off." "No," says the conductor, "this is an express-train, and it don't stop until it gets to the Grand Central depot of Smashupton!" Ah, "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red, when it giveth its color in the cup, when it moveth itself aright. At the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." And if any young man of my congregation should get astray this summer in this direction, it will not be because I have not given him fair warning.

My friends, whether you tarry at home—which will be quite as safe and perhaps quite as comfortable—or go into the country, arm yourself against temptation. The grace of God is the only safe shelter, whether in town or country. There are watering-places accessible to all of us. You cannot open a book of the Bible without finding out some such watering-place. Fountains open for sin and uncleanness. Wells of salvation. Streams from Lebanon. A flood struck out of the rock by Moses. Fountains in the wilderness discovered by Hagar. Water to drink and water to bathe in. The river of God which is full of water. Water of which if a man drink, he shall never thirst. Wells of water in the Valley of Baca.

Living fountains of water. A pure river of water as clear as crystal from under the throne of God. These are watering-places accessible to all of us. We do not have a laborious packing up before we start—only the throwing away of our transgressions. No expensive hotel bills to pay; it is "without money and without price." No long and dusty travel before we get there; it is only one step away. In California, in five minutes I walked around and saw ten fountains all bubbling up, and they were all different; and in five minutes I can go through this Bible *parterre* and find you fifty bright, sparkling fountains bubbling up into eternal life—healing and therapeutic. A chemist will go to one of these summer watering-places and take the water, and analyze it, and tell you that it contains so much of iron, and so much of soda, and so much of lime, and so much of magnesia. I come to this Gospel well, this living fountain, and analyze the water; and I find that its ingredients are peace, pardon, forgiveness, hope, comfort, life, heaven. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye" to this watering-place. Crowd around this Bethesda this morning. O, you sick, you lame, you troubled, you dying—crowd around this Bethesda. Step in it, oh, step in it! The angel of the covenant this morning stirs the water! Why do you not step in it? Some of you are too weak to take a step in that direction. Then we take you up in the arms of our closing prayer, and plunge you clean under the wave, hoping that the cure may be as sudden and as radical as with Captain Naaman, who, blotched and carbuncled, stepped into the Jordan, and after the seventh dive came up, his skin roseate complexioned as the flesh of a little child.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE TIDES OF MUNICIPAL SIN.

He beheld the city, and wept over it.—Luke xix: 41.

The citizens of Old Jerusalem are in the tip-top of excitement. A country man has been doing some wonderful works and asserting very high authority. The police court has issued papers for his arrest, for this thing must be stopped, as the very government is imperilled. News comes that last night this stranger arrived at a suburban village, and that he is stopping at the house of a man whom he had resuscitated after four days' sepulture. Well, the people rush out into the streets, some with the idea of helping in the arrest of this stranger when he arrives, and others expecting that on the morrow he will come into the town, and by some supernatural force oust the municipal and royal authorities and take everything in his own hands. They pour out of the city gates until the procession reaches to the village. They come all around about the house where the stranger is stopping, and peer into the doors and windows that they may get one glimpse of him or hear the hum of his voice. The police dare not make the arrest because he has, somehow, won the affections of all the people. O, it is a lively night in Bethany. The heretofore quiet village is filled with uproar, and outcry, and loud discussion about the strange acting countryman. I do not think there was any sleep in that house that night where the stranger was stopping. Although he came in weary he finds no rest, though for once in his lifetime he had a pillow. But the morning dawns, the olive gardens wave in the light, and all along the road, reaching over the top of Olivet toward Jerusalem, there is a vast swaying crowd of wondering people. The excitement around the door of the cottage is wild, as the stranger steps out beside an unbroken colt that had never been mounted, and after his friends had strewn their garments on the beast for a saddle, the Saviour mounts it, and the populace, excited, and shouting, and feverish, push on back toward Jerusalem. Let none jeer now or scoff at this rider, or the populace will trample him under foot in an instant. There is one long shout of two miles, and as far as the eye can reach you see wavings of demonstrations and approval. There was something in the rider's visage, something in his majestic brow, something in his princely behavior, that stirs up the enthusiasm of the people. They run up against the beast and try to pull off into their arms, and carry on their shoulders, the illustrious stranger. The populace are so excited that they hardly know what to do with themselves, and some rush up to the roadside trees and wrench off branches and throw them in his way; and others doff their garments, what though they be new and costly, and spread them for a carpet for the conqueror to ride over. "Hosanna!" cry the people at the foot of the hill. "Hosanna!" cry the people all up and down the mountain. The procession has now come to the brow of Olivet. Magnificent prospect reaching out in every direction—vineyards, olive groves, jutting rock, silvery Siloam, and above all, rising on its throne of hills, the most highly honored city of all the earth, Jerusalem. Christ there, in the midst of the procession, looks off, and sees here fortressed gates, and yonder the circling wall, and here the towers blazing in the sun, Phasælus and Mariamne.

Yonder is Hippicus, the king's castle. Looking along in the range of the larger branch of that olive tree you see the mansions of the merchant princes. Through this cleft in the limestone rock you see the palace of the richest trafficker in all the earth. He has made his money by selling Tyrian purple. Behold now the Temple! Clouds of smoke lifting from the shimmering roof, while the building rises up beautiful, grand, majestic, the architectural skill and glory of the earth lifting themselves there in one triumphant doxology, the frozen prayer of all nations.

The crowd looked around to see exhilaration and transport in the face of Christ. O, no! Out from amid the gates, and the domes, and the palaces there arose a vision of that city's sin, and of that city's doom, which obliterated the landscape from horizon to horizon, and he burst into tears. "He beheld the city, and wept over it."

Standing in some high tower of the beloved city of our residence, we might look off upon a wondrous scene of enterprise, and wealth, and beauty; long streets faced by comfortable homes, here and there rising into affluence, while we might find thousands of people who would be glad to cast palm branches in the way of him who comes from Bethany to Jerusalem, greeting him with the vociferation: "Hosanna! to the Son of David." And yet how much there is to mourn over in our cities. Passing along the streets to-day are a great multitude. Whither do they go? To church. Thank God for that. Listen, this morning, and you hear multitudinous voices of praise. Thank God for that. When the evening falls you will find Christian men and women knocking at hovels of poverty, and finding no light, taking the matches from their pocket, and by a momentary glance revealing wan faces, and wasted hands, and ragged bed, sending in before morning, candles and vials of medicine, and Bibles and loaves of bread, and two or three flowers from the hot-house. Thank God for all that. But listen again, and you hear the thousand-voiced shriek of blasphemy tearing its way up from the depths of the city. You see the uplifted decanters emptied now, but uplifted to fight down the devils they have raised. Listen to that wild laugh at the street corner, that makes the pure shudder and say: "Poor thing, that's a lost soul!" Hark! to the click of the gambler's dice and the hysteric guffaw of him who has pocketed the last dollar of that young man's estate. This is the banquet of Bacchus. That young man has taken his first glass. That man has taken down three-fourths of his estate. This man is trembling with last night's debauch. This man has pawned everything save that old coat. This man is in delirium, sitting pale and unaware of anything that is transpiring about him—quiet until after awhile he rises up with a shriek, enough to make the denizens of the pit clap to the door and put their fingers in their ears, and rattle their chains still louder to drown out the horrible outcry. You say: "Is it not strange that there should be so much suffering and sin in our cities?" No, it is not strange. When I look abroad and see the temptations that are attempting to destroy men for time and eternity, I am surprised in the other direction that there are any true, upright, honest, Christian people left. There is but little hope for any man in these great cities who has not established in his soul, sound, thorough Christian principle.

First, look around you and see the temptations to commercial frauds. Here is a man who starts in business. He says: "I'm going to be honest;" but on the same street, on the same block, in the same business, are Shylocks. Those men, to get the patronage of any one, will break all understandings with other merchants, and will sell at ruinous cost, putting their neighbors at great disadvantage, expecting to make up the deficit in something else. If an honest principle could creep into that man's soul, it would die of sheer loneliness! The man twists about, trying to escape the penalty of the law, and despises God, while he is just a little anxious about the sheriff. The honest man looks about him and says: "Well, this rivalry is awful. Perhaps I am more scrupulous than I need be. This little bargain I am about to enter is a little doubtful; but then they all do it." And so I had a friend who started in commercial life, and as a book merchant, with a high resolve. He said: "In my store there shall be no books that I would not have my family read." Time passed on, and one day I went into his store and found some iniquitous books on the shelf, and I said to him: "How is it possible that you can consent to sell such books as these?" "Oh," he replied: "I have got over those puritanical notions. A man cannot do business in this day unless he does it in the way other people do it." To make a long story short, he lost his hope of heaven, and in a little while he lost his morality, and then he went into a mad-house. In other words, when a man casts off God, God casts him off.

One of the mightiest temptations in commercial life, in all our cities, to-day, is in the fact that many professed Christian men are not square in their bargains. Such men are in Baptist, and Methodist, and Congregational Churches, and our own denomination is as largely represented as any of them. Our good merchants are foremost in Christian enterprises; they are patronizers of art, philanthropic and patriotic. God will attend to them in the day of His coronation. I am not speaking of them, but of those in commercial life who are setting a ruinous example to our young merchants. Go through all the stores and offices in the city, and tell me in how many of those stores and offices are the principles of Christ's religion dominant? In three-fourths of them? No. In half of them? No. In one-tenth of them? No. Decide for yourself.

The impression is abroad, somehow, that charity can consecrate iniquitous gains, and that if a man give to God a portion of an unrighteous bargain, then the Lord will forgive him the rest. The secretary of a benevolent society came to me and said: "Mr. So-and-So has given a large amount of money to the missionary cause," mentioning the sum. I said: "I can't believe it." He said: "It is so." Well, I went home, staggered and confounded. I never knew the man to give to anything; but after awhile I found out that he had been engaged in the most infamous kind of an oil swindle, and then he proposed to compromise the matter with the Lord, saying: "Now, here is so much for Thee, Lord. Please to let me off!" I want to tell you that the Church of God is not a shop for receiving stolen goods, and that if you have taken anything from your fellows, you had better return it to the men to whom it belongs. If, from the nature of the circumstances, that be impossible, you had better get your stove red hot, and when the flames are at their fiercest, toss in the accursed spoil. God does not want it. The commercial world to-day is rotten through and through, and many of you know better than I can tell you that it requires great strength of moral character to withstand the temptations of business dishonesties. Thank God, a great many of you have withstood the temptations, and are as pure, and upright, and honest as the day when you entered business. But you are the exceptions in the case. God will sustain a man, however, amid all the excitements of business, if he will only put his trust in Him. In the drug-store, in Philadelphia, a young man was told that he must sell blacking on the Lord's day. He said to the head man of the firm: "I can't possibly do that. I am willing to sell medicines on the Lord's day, for I think that is right and necessary: but I can't sell this patent blacking." He was discharged from the place. A Christian man hearing of it, took him into his employ, and he went on from one success to another, until he was known all over the land for his faith in God and his good works, as well as for his worldly success. When a man has sacrificed any temporal, financial good for the sake of his spiritual interests, the Lord is on his side, and one with God is a majority.

Again: Look around you and see the pressure of political life. How many are going down under this influence. There is not one man out of a thousand that can stand political life in our cities. Once in awhile a man comes and says: "Now I love my city and my country, and, in the strength of God, I am going in as a sort of missionary to reform politics." The Lord is on his side. He comes out as pure as when he went in, and, with such an idea, I believe he will be sustained; but he is the exception. When such an upright, pure man does step into politics, the first thing, the newspapers take the job of blackening him all over, and they review all his past life, and distort everything that he has done, until, from thinking himself a highly respectable citizen, he begins to contemplate what a mercy it is that he has been so long out of gaol. The most hopeless, God-forsaken people in all our cities are those who, not in a missionary spirit, but with the idea of sordid gain, have gone into political life. I pray for the prisoners in gaol, and think they may be converted to God, but I never have any faith to pray for an old-politician.

Then look around and see the allurements to an impure life. Bad books, unknown to father and mother, vile as the lice of Egypt, creeping into some of the best of families of the community; and boys read them while the teacher is looking the other way, or at recess, or on the corner of the street when the groups are gathered. These books are read late at night. Satan finds them a smooth plank on which he can slide down into perdition some of your sons and daughters. Reading bad books—one never gets over it. The books may be burned, but there is not enough power in all the apothecary's preparations to wash out the stain from the soul. Father's hands, mother's hands, sister's hands, will not wash it out. None but the hand of the Lord God can wash it out. And what is more perilous in regard to these temptations, we may not mention them. While God in this Bible, from chapter to chapter, thunders His denunciation against these crimes, people expect the pulpit and the printing-press to be silent on the subject, and just in proportion as people are impure are they fastidious on the theme. They are so full of decay and death they do not want their sepulchres opened. But I shall not be hindered by them. I shall go on in the name of the Lord Almighty, before whom you and I must at last come in judgment, and I shall pursue that vile sin, and thrust it with the two edged-sword of God's truth, though I find it sheltered under the chandeliers of some of your beautiful parlors. God will turn into destruction all the unclean, and no splendors of surrounding can make decent that which He has smitten. God will not excuse sin merely because it has costly array, and beautiful tapestry, and palatial residence, any more than He will excuse that which crawls, a blotch of sores, through the lowest cellar. Ever and anon, through some law-suit there flashes upon the people of our great cities what is transpiring in seemingly respectable circles. You call it "High life," you call it "Fast living," you call it "People's eccentricity." And while we kick off the sidewalk the poor wretch who has not the means to garnish his iniquity, these lords and ladies, wrapped in purple and fine linen, go unwhipped of public justice. Ah, the most dreadful part of the whole thing is that there are persons abroad whose whole business it is to despoil the young. Salaried by infamous establishments, these cormorants of darkness, these incarnate fiends, hang around your hotels, and your theatres, and they insinuate themselves among the clerks of your stores, and, by adroitest art, sometimes get in the purest circles. Oh, what an eternity such a man as that will have! As the door opens to receive him, thousands of voices will cry out: "See here what you have done;" and the wretch will wrap himself with fiercer flame and leap into deeper darkness, and the multitudes he has destroyed will pursue him, and hurl at him the long, bitter, relentless, everlasting curse of their own anguish. If there be one cup of eternal darkness more bitter than another, they will have to drink it to the dregs. If, in all the ocean of the lost world that comes billowing up, there be one wave more fierce than another, it will dash over them. "God will wound the hairy scalp of him who goeth on still in his trespasses."

I think you are persuaded there is but little chance here in Brooklyn, or in New York, or Philadelphia, or Boston, for any young man without the grace of God. I will even go further and make it more emphatic, and say there is no chance for any young man who has not above him, and beneath him, and before him, and behind him, and on the right of him, and on the left of him, and within him, the all-protecting grace of God. My word of warning is to those who have recently come to the city; some of them entering our banking institutions, and some of them our stores and shops. Shelter yourselves in God. Do not trust yourselves an hour without the defences of Christ's religion.

I stood one day at Niagara Falls, and I saw what you may have seen there, six rainbows bending over that tremendous plunge. I never saw anything like it before or since. Six beautiful rainbows arching that great cataract! And so over the rapids and the angry precipices of sin, where so many have been dashed down, God's beautiful admonitions hover, a warning arching each peril—six of them, fifty of them—a thousand of them. Beware! beware! beware! This afternoon, young men, while you have time to reflect upon these things, and before the duties of the office and the store, and the shop come upon you again, look over this whole subject, and after the day has passed, and you hear in the nightfall the voices and the footsteps of the city dying from your ear, and it gets so silent that you can hear distinctly your watch under your pillow going "tick, tick!" then open your eyes, and look out upon the darkness, and see two pillars of light, one horizontal, the other perpendicular, but changing their direction until they come together, and your enraptured vision beholds it—THE CROSS!

CHAPTER XIV.

RESPONSIBILITY OF CITY RULERS.

O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea.—Ezek. xxvii: 3.

This is a part of an impassioned apostrophe to the city of Tyre. It was a beautiful city—a majestic city. At the east end of the Mediterranean, it sat with one hand beckoning the inland trade, and with the other the commerce of foreign nations. It swung a monstrous boom across its harbor to shut out foreign enemies, and then swung back that boom to let in its friends. The air of the desert was fragrant with the spices brought by caravans to her fairs, and all seas were cleft into foam by the keel of her laden merchantmen. Her markets were rich with horses, and mules, and camels from Togarmah; with upholstery, and ebony, and ivory from Dedan; with emeralds, and agate, and coral from Syria; with wine from Helbon; with finest needlework from Ashur and Chilmad. Talk about the splendid state-rooms of your White Star and French lines of international steamers. —why the benches of the state-rooms in those Tyrian ships were all ivory, and instead of our coarse canvas on the masts of the shipping, they had the finest linen, quilted together, and inwrought with embroideries almost miraculous for beauty. Its columns overshadowed all nations. Distant empires felt its heart beat. Majestic city! "situate at the entry of the sea."

But where now is the gleam of her towers, the roar of her chariots, the masts of her shipping? Let the fishermen who dry their nets on the place where she once stood; let the sea that rushes upon the barrenness where she once challenged the admiration of all nations; let the barbarians who build their huts on the place where her palaces glittered, answer the question. Blotted out for ever! She forgot God, and God forgot her. And while our modern cities admire her glory, let them take warning at her awful doom.

Cain was the founder of the first city, and I suppose it took after him in morals. It is a long while before a city can get over the character of those who founded it. Were they criminal exiles, the filth, and the prisons, and the debauchery are the shadows of such founders. New York will not for two or three hundred years escape from the good influences of its founders,—the pious settlers whose prayers went up from the very streets where now banks discount, and brokers shave, and companies declare dividends, and smugglers swear Custom-house lies; and above the roar of the drays, and the crack of auctioneers' mallets is heard the ascription—"We worship thee, O thou almighty dollar!" The church that once stood on Wall-street still throws its blessing over all the scene of traffic, and upon the ships that fold their white wings in the harbor. Originally men gathered in cities from necessity. It was to escape the incendiary's torch or the assassin's dagger. Only the very poor lived in the country, those who had nothing that could be stolen, or vagabonds who wanted to be near their place of business; but since civilization and religion have made it safe for men to live almost anywhere, men congregate in cities because of the opportunity for rapid gain. Cities are not necessarily evils, as has sometimes been argued. They have been the birth-place of civilization. In them popular liberty has lifted up its voice. Witness Genoa, and Pisa, and Venice. The entrance of the representatives of the cities in the legislatures of Europe was the death-blow to feudal kingdoms. Cities are the patronizers of art and literature,—architecture pointing to its British Museum in London, its Royal Library in Paris, its Vatican in Rome. Cities hold the world's sceptre. Africa was Carthage, Greece was Athens, England is London, France is Paris, Italy is Rome, and the cluster of cities in which God has cast our lot will yet decide the destiny of the American people.

The particular city in which God has given us a residence is under especial advantage. I may this morning apostrophize it in the words of my text, and say: "O thou that art situate at the entry of the sea!" Standing at the gates of the continent, we try to keep that which is worth keeping, and we try to pass on that which is of no use. The best pictures are in our galleries for exhibition, and foreign orators stop long enough to speak in our halls. The finest equipages may be seen on our Broadway, and making the circuit of our Central and Prospect Parks,—places fascinating with mosque, and fountains, and sculptured bridges, embowered walks, and menageries of wild animals, for the amusement of the people; while our Croton and Ridgewood acqueducts pour their brightness and refreshment into the hot lips of the thirsty cities. Thanking God this morning for the pleasant place in which He has cast our lot; and at this season of the year when so many of the offices of the city are changing hands, and so many new men are coming into positions of public trust, I have thought it might be useful to talk a little while about the moral responsibility resting upon the office-bearers in the city—a theme as appropriate to those who are governed as to the governors. The moral characters of those who rule a city has much to do with the character of the city itself. Men, women, and children are all interested in national politics. When the great Presidential election comes, every patriot wants to be found at the ballot box. We are all interested in the discussion of national reconstruction, national finance, national debt, and we read the laws of Congress, and we are wondering who will sit next in the Presidential chair. Now, that may be all very well—is very well; but it is high time that we took some of the attention which we have been devoting to national affairs and brought it to the study of municipal government. This it seems to me now is the chief point to be taken. Make the cities right, and the nation will be right. I have noticed that according to their opportunities there has really been more corruption in municipal governments in this country than in the State and national Legislatures. Now, is there no hope? With the mightiest agent in our hand, the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ, shall not all our cities be reformed, and purified, and redeemed? I believe the day will come. I am in full sympathy with those who are opposed to carrying politics into religion; but our cities will never be reformed and purified until we carry religion into politics. I look over this city and I see that all our great interests are to be affected in the future, as they have been affected in the past, by the character of those who in the different departments rule over us, and I propose this morning to classify some of those interests.

In the first place I remark: Commercial ethics *are always affected by the moral or immoral character of those who have municipal supremacy.* Officials that wink at fraud, and that have neither censure or arraignment for glittering dishonesties, always weaken the pulse of commercial honor. Every shop, every store, every bazaar, every factory in your city feels the moral character of your City Hall. If in any city there be a dishonest mayoralty, or an unprincipled Common Council, or a Court susceptible to bribes, in that city there will be unlimited license for all kinds of trickery and sin; while, on the other hand, if officials are faithful to their oath of office, if the laws are promptly executed, if there is vigilance in regard to the outbranchings of crime, there is the highest protection for all bargain making. A merchant may stand in his store and say: "Now I'll have nothing to do with city politics; I will not soil my hands with the slush;" nevertheless the most insignificant trial in the police court will affect that merchant directly or indirectly. What style of clerk issues the writ; what style of constable makes the arrest; what style of attorneys issue the plea; what style of judge charges the jury; what style of sheriff executes the sentence—these are questions that strike your counting-rooms to the centre. You may not throw it off. In the city of New York Christian merchants for a great while said: "We'll have nothing to do with the management of public affairs," and they allowed everything to go at loose ends until there rolled up in that city a debt of nearly 120,000,000 dollars. The municipal government became a hissing and a by-word in the whole earth, and then the Christian merchants saw their folly, and they went and took possession of the ballot boxes. I wish all commercial men to understand that they are not independant of the moral character of the men who rule over them, but must be thoroughly, mightily affected by them.

So, also, of the educational interests of a city. Do you know that there are in this country sixty-five thousand common schools, and that there are over seven millions of pupils, and that the majority of those schools and the majority of those pupils are in our cities? Now, this great multitude of children will be affected by the intelligence or ignorance, the virtue or the vice, of Boards of Education and Boards of Control. There are cities—I am glad ours is not one of them—but there are cities where educational affairs are settled in the low caucus in the abandoned parts of the cities, by men full of ignorance and rum. It ought not to be so; but in many cities it is so. I hear the tramp of the coming generations. What that great multitude of youth shall be for this world and the next will be affected very much by the character of your public schools. You had better multiply the moral and religious influences about the common schools rather than subtract from them. Instead of driving the Bible out, you had better drive the Bible further in. May God defend our glorious common school system, and send into rout and confusion all its sworn enemies.

I have also to say that *the character of officials in a city affects the domestic circle.* In a city where grog-shops have their own way, and gambling hells are not interfered with, and for fear of losing political influence officials close their eyes to festering abominations—in all those cities, the home interests need to make imploration. The family circles of the city must inevitably be affected by the moral character or the immoral character of those who rule over them.

I will go further and say that the religious interests of a city are thus affected. The church to-day has to contend with evils that the civil law ought to smite; and while I would not have the civil government in any wise relax its energy in the arrest and punishment of crime, I would have a thousand-fold more energy put forth in the drying up of the fountains of iniquity. The Church of God asks no pecuniary aid from political power; but does ask that in addition to all the evils we must necessarily contend against we shall not have to fight also municipal negligence. O, that in all our cities Christian people would rise up, and that they would put their hand on the helm before piratical demagogues have swamped the ship. Instead of giving so much time to national politics, give some of your attention to municipal government.

I am glad to know that recently our city has been cleansed of a great deal of political vermin, and yet it is not all gone. I see them still crawling around your City Hall—the disgust of all good men. Somehow, in the grinding of the political machine, they come on the top of the wheel. They electioneer hard at the polls, and they must have some crumbs of office or they will change their politics. The Democratic party would have us believe that that kind of men belong to the Republican party, and the Republican party would have us believe that that kind of men belong to the Democratic party. They are both wrong. They belong to both. It was well illustrated at the last election in New York City, where the two political parties, rousing themselves up to the fact that they ought to have some great reformer, some large-hearted reformer, some unimpeachable reformer—the two political parties joined together and elected to the Senatorial chair—John Morrissey! O, I demand that the Christian people who have been standing aloof from public affairs come back, and in the might of God try to save our cities. If things are or have been bad, it is because you have let them be bad. That Christian man who merely goes to the polls and casts his vote does not do his duty. It is not the ballot box that decides the election, it is the political caucus; and if at the primary meetings of the two political parties unfit and bad men are nominated, then the ballot box has nothing to do save to take its choice between two thieves! In our churches, by reformatory organization, in every way let us try to tone up the moral sentiment in these cities. The rulers are those whom the people choose, and depend upon it that in all the cities, as long as pure-hearted men stand aloof from politics because they despise hot partisanship, just so long in many of our cities will rum make the nominations, and rum control the ballot box, and rum inaugurate the officials.

I take a step further this morning, and I ask that all those of you who believe in the omnipotence of prayer, day by day, and every day, present your city officials before God for a blessing. *Pray for your mayor.* The chief magistrate of five hundred thousand souls is in a position of great responsibility. Many of the kings, and queens, and emperors of other days had no such dominion. With the scratch of a pen he may advance a beneficent institution or baulk an elevated steam railway confiscation. By appointments he may bless or curse every hearth-stone in the city. If in the Episcopal churches, by the authority of the Litany, and in our non-Episcopate churches, we every Sabbath pray for the President of the United States, why not, then, be just as hearty in our supplications for the chief magistrate of our cities, for their guidance, for their health, for their present and their everlasting morality?

But go further, and *pray for your Common Council.* They hold in their hands a power splendid for good or terrible for evil. They have many temptations. In many of the cities whole Boards of Common Councilmen have gone down in the maelstrom of political corruption. They could not stand the power of the bribe. Corruption came in and sat beside them, and sat behind them, and sat before them. They recklessly voted away the hard-earned moneys of the people. They were bought out, body, mind, and soul, so that at the end of their term of office they had not enough of moral remains left to make a decent funeral. They went into office with the huzza of the multitude. They came out with the anathema of all decent people. There is not one man out of a hundred that can endure the temptations of the Common Councilmen in our great cities. And if a man in that position have the courage of a Cromwell, and the independence of an Andrew Jackson, and the public spiritedness of a John Frederick Oberlin, and the piety of an Edward Payson, he will have no surplus to throw away. Pray for these men. Every man likes to be prayed for. Do you know how Dr. Norman McLeod became the Queen's chaplain? It was by a warm-hearted prayer in the Scotch kirk, in behalf of the Royal Family, one Sabbath when the Queen and her son were present *incognito.*

Yes, go further, my friends, and *pray for your police.* Their perils, and temptations, best known to themselves. They hold the order and the peace of your city in their grasp. But for their intervention you would not be safe for an hour. They must face the storm. They must rush in where it seems to them almost instant death. They must put the hand of arrest on the armed maniac, and corner the murderer. They must refuse large rewards for withdrawing complaints. They must unravel intricate plots, and trace dark labyrinths of crime, and develop suspicions into certainties. They must be cool while others are frantic. They must be vigilant while others are somnolent, impersonating the very villainy they want to seize. In the police forces of our great cities are to-day men of as thorough character as that of the old detective of New York, addressed to whom there came letters from London asking for help ten years after he was dead—letters addressed to "Jacob Hayes, High Constable of New York." Your police need your appreciation, your sympathy, your gratitude, and, above all, your prayers. And there is no church more indebted to that class of men than this. When, last year, we were arraigning some public iniquities, and the wrath of all the powers of darkness seemed to be stirred up, the police came in—not at our invitation, but voluntarily—and sixty of them sat in every service in this church, for six weeks, that there might be neither interruption nor bloodshed. We thank them. We sympathize with them. We pray for them.

Yea, I want you to go further, and *pray every day for your prison inspectors and your jail-keepers,*—work awful and beneficent. Rough men, cruel men, impatient men, are not fit for those places. They have under their care men who were once as good as you, but they got tripped up. Bad company, or strong drink, or a strange conjunction of circumstances, flung them headlong. Go down that prison corridor and ask them how they got in, and about their families, and what their early prospects in life were, and you will find that they are very much like yourself, except in this: that God kept you while He did not restrain them. Just one false step made the difference between them and you. They want more than prison bars, more than jail fare, more than handcuffs and hopplers, more than a vermin-covered couch to reform them. PrayGod day by day that the men who have these unfortunates in charge may be merciful, Christianly strategic, and the means of reformation and rescue. Some years ago a city pastor in New York was called to the city prison to attend a funeral.

A young woman had committed a crime, and was incarcerated, and her mother came to visit her, and died on the visit. The mother, having no home, was buried from her daughter's prison-cell. After the service was over, the imprisoned daughter came up to the minister of Christ, and said: "Wouldn't you like to see my poor mother?" And while they stood at the coffin, the minister of Christ said to that imprisoned soul: "Don't you feel to-day, in the presence of your mother's dead body, as if you ought to make a vow before God that you will do differently and live a better life?" She stood for a few moments, and then the tears rolled down her cheeks, and she pulled from her right hand the worn-out glove that she had put on in honor of the obsequies, and, having bared her right hand, she put it upon the chill brow of her dead mother, and said: "By the help of God I swear I will do differently. God help me." And she kept her vow. And years after, when she was told of the incident, she said: "When that minister of the Gospel said: 'God bless you and help you to keep the vow that you have made,' I cried out, and I said: 'You bless me! Do you bless me? Why, that's the first kind word I've heard in ten years;' and it thrilled through my soul, and it was the means of my reformation, and ever since, by the grace of God, I've tried to live a Christian life." O yes, there are many amid the criminal classes that may be reformed. Pray for the men who have these unfortunates in charge; and who knows but that, when you are leaving this world, you may hear the voice of Christ dropping to your dying pillow, saying: "I was sick and in prison, and you visited me." Yea, I take the suggestion of the Apostle Paul, and ask you to pray for all who are in authority, that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives in godliness and honesty.

My word this morning now is to all in this assembly and to those whom these words shall come who hold any public position of trust in our midst. You are God's representatives. God the King, and Ruler, and Judge, sets you in His place. O, be faithful in the discharge of all your duties, so that when Brooklyn is in ashes, and the world itself is a red scroll of flame, you may be in the mercy and grace of Christ rewarded for your faithfulness. It was that feeling which gave such eminent qualifications for office to Neal Dow, Mayor of Portland, and to Judge McLean, of Ohio, and to Benjamin F. Butler, Attorney-General of New York, and to George Briggs, Governor of Massachusetts, and to Theodore Frelinghuysen, Senator of the United States, and to William Wilberforce, member of the British Parliament. You may make the rewards of eternity the emoluments of your office. What care you for adverse political criticism if you have God on your side? The one, or the two, or the three years of your public trust will pass away, and all the years of your earthly service, and then the tribunal will be lifted, before which you and I must appear. May God make you so faithful now that the last scene shall be to you exhilaration and rapture. I wish this morning to exhort all good people, whether they are the governors or the governed, to make one grand effort for the salvation, the purification, the redemption of Brooklyn. Do you not know that there are multitudes going down to ruin, temporal and eternal, dropping quicker than words drop from my lips? Grogshops swallow them up. Gambling hells devour them. Houses of shame are damning them. O, let us toil, and pray, and preach, and vote until all these wrongs are righted. What we do we must do quickly. Soon you will not sit there, and I will not stand here. With our rulers, and on the same platform, we must at last come before the throne of God to answer for what we have done for the bettering of the condition of the five hundred thousand people in Brooklyn. Alas! if on that day it be found that your hand has been idle and my pulpit has been silent. O, ye who are pure, and honest, and Christian, go to work and help me to make this city pure, and honest, and Christian.

Lest it may have been thought that I am this morning preaching only to what are called the better classes, my final word is to some dissolute soul that has strayed here to-day. Though you may be covered with all crimes, though you may be smitten with all leprosies, though you may have gone through the whole catalogue of iniquity, and may not have been in church for twenty years before to-day—before you leave this house you may have your nature entirely reconstructed, and upon your brow, hot with infamous practices and besweated with exhausting indulgences, God will place the flashing coronet of a Saviour's forgiveness. "O, no!" you say, "if you knew who I am and where I came from this morning, you wouldn't say that to me. I don't believe the Gospel you are preaching speaks of my case." Yes it does, my brother. And then when you tell me that, I think of what St. Teresa said when reduced to utter destitution, having only two pieces of money left, she jingled the two pieces of money in her hand and said: "St. Teresa and two pieces of money are nothing; but St. Teresa and two pieces of money and God are all things." And I tell you to-day that while a sin and a sinner are nothing, a sin and a sinner and an all-forgiving and all-compassionate God are everything.

Who is that that I see coming? I know his step. I know his rags. Who is it? A prodigal. Come, people of God, let us go out and meet him. Get the best robe you can find in all this house. Let the angels of God fill their chalices and drink to his eternal rescue. Come, people of God, let us go out to meet him. The prodigal is coming home. The dead is alive again, and the lost is found. Hallelujah!

"Pleased with the news, the saints below
In songs their tongues employ;
Beyond the skies the tidings go,
And Heaven is filled with joy.

"Nor angels can their joy contain,
But kindle with new fire;
'The sinner lost is found,' they sing,
And strike the sounding lyre."

CHAPTER XV.

SAFEGUARDS OF YOUNG MEN.

"Is the young man Absalom safe?"—II. Sam. xviii: 29.

The heart of David, the father, was wrapped up in his boy Absalom. He was a splendid boy, judged by the rules of worldly criticism. From the crown of his head to the sole of his foot there was not a single blemish. The Bible says that he had such a luxuriant shock of hair, that when once a year it was shorn, what was cut off weighed over three pounds. But, notwithstanding all his brilliancy of appearance, he was a bad boy, and broke his father's heart. He was plotting to get the throne of Israel. He had marshalled an army to overthrow his father's government. The day of battle had come. The conflict was begun. David, the father, sat between the gates of the palace waiting for the tidings of the conflict. Oh, how rapidly his heart beat with emotion. Two great questions were to be decided: the safety of his boy, and the continuance of the throne of Israel. After awhile, a servant, standing on the top of the house, looks off, and he sees some one running. He is coming with great speed, and the man on the top of the house announces the coming of the messenger, and the father watches and waits, and as soon as the messenger from the field of battle comes within hailing distance the father cries out. Is it a question in regard to the establishment of his throne? Does he say: "Have the armies of Israel been victorious? Am I to continue in my imperial authority? Have I overthrown my enemies?" Oh! no. There is one question that springs from his heart to the lip, and springs from the lip into the ear of the besweated and bedusted messenger flying from the battle-field—the question, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" When it was told to David, the King, that, though his armies had been victorious, his son had been slain, the father turned his back upon the congratulations of the nation, and went up the stairs of his palace, his heart breaking as he went, wringing his hands sometimes, and then again pressing them against his temples as though he would press them in, crying: "O Absalom! my son! my son! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom! my son! my son!"

My friends, the question which David, the King, asked in regard to his son is the question that resounds to-day in the hearts of hundreds of parents. Yea, there are a great multitude of young men here who know that the question of the text is appropriate when asked in regard to them. They know the temptations by which they are surrounded; they see so many who started life with as good resolutions as they have who have fallen in the path, and they are ready to hear me ask the question of my text: "Is the young man Absalom safe?" The fact is that this life is full of peril. He who undertakes it without the grace of God and a proper understanding of the conflict into which he is going must certainly be defeated. Just look off upon society to-day. Look at the shipwreck of men for whom fair things were promised, and who started life with every advantage. Look at those who have dropped from high social position, and from great fortune, disgraced for time, disgraced for eternity. To prove that this life is an awful peril unless a man has the grace of God to defend him, I point to that wreck of Friday at Ludlow street Jail, showing on what a desolate coast a strong craft may crash and part. Let there be no exhilaration over that man's fate. Instead of the chuckle of satisfaction, let there be in every Christian soul a deep sadness. The fact is, that there are tens of thousands of men in this country who, under the same pressure of temptation, would have fallen as low. Instead of bragging and boasting how you have maintained your integrity, you had better get down on your knees and thank God that His Almighty grace has kept you from the same moral catastrophe. There is no advice more appropriate to you and this whole country this morning than the advice of the Scripture, which says: "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall." All my sympathies are for the afflicted family of that dead prisoner. For the last seven years some of them I know have endured an inquisition of torture. May the God of all comfort help them in this day when there are so few to pray for them. In the presence of this Christian assemblage I invoke the God of all compassion to have mercy upon those bereft children. It is hard to see our friends die, even when they die in Christian triumph and with all blissful surroundings; but alas! when to the natural anguish is added the anguish of a moral and a lifetime shipwreck. Ah! my friends, let us remember that that man made full expiation to society for his crimes against it. Let us remember that by pangs of body that no doctor could arrest, and by horrors of soul which no imagination can describe, he fully paid the price of his iniquity. Let others do as they may, I will not throw one nettle or one thistle on that man's grave. But, my friends, no minister of religion, no man who stands as I do, Sabbath morning and Sabbath night and Friday night, before a great multitude of young men, trying to help them and educate them for time and eternity, can allow that event of the past week to go by without drawing from it a lesson of the fact that life is an awful peril without the religion of Jesus Christ, and that "the way of the transgressor is hard." No stouter nature ever started out on this world than William M. Tweed. He conquered poverty; he conquered lack of education; he achieved an aldermanic chair in the metropolis of this country; he gained a position in the Congress at Washington, and then he took his position on a financial throne of power at Albany, his frown making legislative assemblages tremble, while he divided the notoriety with James Fisk, Jr., of being the two great miscreants of the nineteenth century. Alas! Alas! Young man, look at the contrast—in elegant compartment of Wagner's palace-car, surrounded by wines and cards and obsequious attendants, going to the Senatorial place in Albany; then look again at the plain box in the undertaker's wagon at three o'clock of last Friday at the door of a prison. Behold the contrast—the pictured and bouqueted apartments at the Delavan, liveried servants admitting millionaires and Senators who were flattered to take his hand; then see the almost friendless prisoner on a plain cot, throwing out his dying hand to clutch that of Luke, his black attendant. Behold the wedding party at the mansion, the air bewitched with crowns, and stars, and harps of tuberoses and japonicas; among the wedding presents, forty complete sets of silver; fifteen diamond sets, one set of diamonds worth $45,000; the wedding dress at the expense of $4,000, with trimmings that cost another $1,000; two baskets of silverware, representing icebergs, to contain the ices, while Polar bears of silver lie down on the handles of the baskets; the banquet, the triumph of

Delmonico's lifetime; the whole scene a bewilderment of costliness and magnificence. And then behold the low-ceiling room, looking out on a dingy street, where poor, exhausted, forsaken, betrayed, sick William M. Tweed lies a dying. From how high up to how low down! There were many common people in New York who for years were persuaded by what they saw that an honest and laborious life did not pay. As the carriage swept by containing the jewelled despoiler of public funds, men felt like throwing their burdens down and trying some other way of getting a livelihood; but where is the clerk on $500 salary a year, where is the porter who will to-morrow sweep out the store, where is the scavenger of the street who would take Tweed's years of fraudulent prosperity if he must also take Tweed's sufferings, and Tweed's dishonor, and Tweed's death? Ah! there never was such an illustration for the young men of New York and Brooklyn of the fact that dishonesty will not pay. Take a dishonest dollar and bury it in the centre of the earth, and heap all the rocks of the mountain on the top of it; then cover these rocks with all the diamonds of Golconda, and all the silver of Nevada, and all the gold of California and Australia, put on the top of these all banking and moneyed institutions, and they cannot keep down that one dishonest dollar. That one dishonest dollar in the centre of the earth will begin to heave and rock and upturn itself until it comes to the resurrection of damnation. "As a partridge sitteth on eggs and hatcheth them not, so riches got by fraud, a man shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool." You tell me that in the last days the man of whom I speak read his Bible three times a day. I cast no slur on such a thing as that. It was beautiful, and it was appropriate. God could save that man as easily as He could save you or me. Had I been called to do so, I should have knelt by his cot in the prison and prayed for his soul with as much confidence as I would kneel by your bedside. Oh! the Lord, long-suffering, merciful, and gracious; height above all height, depth below all depth, and any man who cries for mercy shall get it. But who would want to live a life hostile to the best interests of society, even though in his last moments he could make his peace with God and enter heaven? So I stand here before the young men, and I am going to have a plain talk with you, and I am going to offer you some safeguards. I shall not preach to you as a minister preaches to a formalistic congregation. I have no gown, or bands, or surplice; but I take you by both hands, my dear brother, and from what I know of life, and from what I know of God, and from what I know of the promises of Divine grace, I shall solemnly yet cheerfully address you. God gives me a great many young men here Sabbath by Sabbath, and it is my great ambition not only to reach heaven myself, but to take them all along with me. And I will, I will, God helping me.

The first safeguard of which I want to speak is a love of home. There are those who have no idea of the pleasures that concentrate around that word "home." Perhaps your early abode was shadowed with vice or poverty. Harsh words, and petulance, and scowling may have destroyed all the sanctity of that spot. Love, kindness, and self-sacrifice, which have built their altars in so many abodes, were strangers in your father's house. God pity you, young man; you never had a home. But a multitude in this audience can look back to a spot that they can never forget. It may have been a lowly roof, but you cannot think of it this morning without a dash of emotion. You have seen nothing on earth that so stirs your soul. A stranger passing along that place might see nothing remarkable about it; but oh! how much it means to you. Fresco on palace wall does not mean so much to you as those rough-hewn rafters. Parks and bowers and trees on fashionable watering-place or country-seat do not mean so much to you as that brook that ran in front of the plain farm-house, and singing under the weeping willows. The barred gateway swung open by porter in full dress, does not mean as much to you as that swing-gate, your sister on one side of it, and you on the other; she gone fifteen years ago into glory. That scene coming back to you to-day, as you swept backward and forward on the gate, singing the songs of your childhood. But there are those here who have their second dwelling-place. It is your adopted home. That also is sacred forever. There you established the first family altar. There your children were born. In that room flapped the wing of the death angel. Under that roof, when your work is done, you expect to lie down and die. There is only one word in all the language that can convey your idea of that place, and that word is "home." Now, let me say that I never knew a man who was faithful to his early and adopted home who was given over at the same time to any gross form of wickedness. If you find more enjoyment in the club-room, in the literary society, in the art-saloon, than you do in these unpretending home pleasures, you are on the road to ruin. Though you may be cut off from your early associates, and though you may be separated from all your kindred, young man, is there not a room somewhere that you can call your own? Though it be the fourth story of a third-class boarding-house, into that room gather books, and pictures, and a harp. Hang your mother's portrait over the mantle. Bid unholy mirth stand back from that threshhold. Consecrate some spot in that room with the knee of prayer. By the memory of other days, a father's counsel, a mother's love, and a sister's confidence, call it home.

Another safeguard for these young men is industrious habit. There are a great many people trying to make their way through the world with their wits instead of by honest toil. There is a young man who comes from the country to the city. He fails twice before he is as old as his father was when he first saw the spires of the great town. At twenty-one years of age he knows Wall Street from Trinity Church to East river docks. He is seated in his room at a rent of $2,000 a year, waiting for the banks to declare their dividends and the stocks to run up. After awhile he gets impatient. He tries to improve his penmanship by making copy-plates of other merchants' signatures! Never mind—all is right in business. After awhile he has his estate. Now is the time for him to retire to the country, amid the flocks and the herds, to culture the domestic virtues. Now the young men who were his schoolmates in boyhood will come, and with their ox-teams draw him logs, and with their hard hands will help to heave up the castle. That is no fancy sketch; it is every-day life. I should not wonder if there were a rotten beam in that palace. I should not wonder if God should smite him with dire sicknesses, and pour into his cup a bitter draught that will thrill him with unbearable agony. I should not wonder if that man's children grew up to be to him a disgrace, and to make his life a shame. I should not wonder if that man died a dishonorable death, and were tumbled into a dishonorable grave, and then went into the gnashing of teeth. The way of the ungodly shall perish. Oh! young man, you must have industry of head, or hand, or foot, or perish. Do not have the idea that you can get along in the world by genius. The curse of this country to-day is genius—men with large self-conceit and nothing else. The man who proposes to make his living by his wits probably has not any. I should rather be an ox, plain, and plodding and useful, than to be an eagle, high-flying and good-for-nothing but to pick out the eyes of carcasses. Even in the Garden of Eden, it was not safe for Adam to be idle, so God made him an horticulturist; and if the married pair had kept busy dressing the vines, they would not have been sauntering under the trees, hankering after fruit that ruined them and their posterity! Proof positive of the fact that when people do not attend to their business they get into mischief. "Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways and be wise; which, having no overseer or guide, provideth her food in the summer and gathereth her meat in the harvest." Satan is a roaring lion, and you can never destroy him by gun or pistol or sword. The weapons with which you are to beat him back are hammer, and adze, and saw, and pickaxe, and yardstick, and the weapon of honest toil. Work, work, or die.

Another safeguard that I want to present to these young men is a high ideal of life. Sometimes soldiers going into battle shoot into the ground instead of into the hearts of their enemies. They are apt to take aim too low, and it is very often that the captain, going into conflict with his men, will cry out, "Now, men, aim high!" The fact is that in life a great many men take no aim at all. The artist plans out his entire thought before he puts it upon canvas, before he takes up the crayon or the chisel. An architect thinks out the entire building before the workmen begin. Although everything may seem to be unorganized, that architect has in his mind every Corinthian column, every Gothic arch, every Byzantine capital. A poet thinks out the entire plot of his poem before he begins to chime the cantos of tinkling rhythms. And yet there are a great many men who start the important structure of human life without knowing whether it is going to be a rude Tartar's hut or a St. Mark's Cathedral, and begin to write out the intricate poem of their life without knowing whether it is to be a Homer's "Odyssey" or a rhymester's botch. Out of one thousand, nine hundred and ninety-nine have no life-plot. Booted and spurred and caparisoned, they hasten along, and I run out and I say: "Hallo, man! Whither away?" "Nowhere!" they say. Oh! young man, make every day's duty a filling up of the great life-plot. Alas! that there should be on this sea of life so many ships that seem bound for no port. They are swept every whither by wind and wave, up by the mountains and down by the valleys. They sail with no chart. They gaze on no star. They long for no harbor. Oh! young man, have a high ideal and press to it, and it will be a mighty safeguard. There never were grander opportunities opening before young men than are opening now. Young men of the strong arm, and of the stout heart, and of the bounding step, I marshal you to-day for a great achievement.

Another safeguard is a respect for the Sabbath. Tell me how a young man spends his Sabbath, and I will tell you what are his prospects in business, and I will tell you what are his prospects for the eternal world. God has thrust into our busy life a sacred day when we are to look after our souls. Is it exorbitant, after giving six days to the feeding and the clothing of these perishable bodies, that God should demand one day for the feeding and the clothing of the immortal soul? Our bodies are seven-day clocks, and they need to be wound up, and if they are not wound up they run down into the grave. No man can continuously break the Sabbath and keep his physical and mental health. Ask those aged men, and they will tell you they never knew men who continuously broke the Sabbath who did not fail either in mind, body or moral principle. A manufacturer gave this as his experience. He said: "I owned a factory on the Lehigh. Everything prospered. I kept the Sabbath, and everything went on well. But one Sabbath morning I bethought myself of a new shuttle, and I thought I would invent that shuttle before sunset; and I refused all food and drink until I had completed that shuttle. By sundown I had completed it. The next day, Monday, I showed to my workmen and friends this new shuttle. They all congratulated me on my great success. I put that shuttle into play. I enlarged my business; but, sir, that Sunday's work cost me $30,000. From that day everything went wrong. I failed in business, and I lost my mill." Oh, my friends, keep the Lord's day. You may think it old-fogy advice, but I give it to you now: "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor and do all thy work; but the seventh is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work." A man said that he would prove that all this was a fallacy, and so he said: "I shall raise a Sunday crop." And he ploughed the field on the Sabbath, and then he put in the seed on the Sabbath and he cultured the ground on the Sabbath. When the harvest was ripe he reaped it on the Sabbath, and he carried it into the mow on the Sabbath, and then he stood out defiant to his Christian neighbors and said: "There, that is my Sunday crop, and it is all garnered." After awhile a storm came up, and a great darkness, and the lightnings of heaven struck the barn, and away went his Sunday crop!

There is one safeguard that I want to present. I have saved it until the last because I want it to be the more emphatic. The great safeguard for every young man is the Christian religion. Nothing can take the place of it. You may have gracefulness enough to put to the blush Lord Chesterfield, you may have foreign languages dropping from your tongue, you may discuss laws and literature, you may have a pen of unequaled polish and power, you may have so much business tact that you can get the largest salary in a banking house, you may be as sharp as Herod and as strong as Samson, and with as long locks as those which hung Absalom, and yet you have no safety against temptation. Some of you look forward to life with great despondency. I know it. I see it in your faces from time to time. You say: "All the occupations and professions are full, and there's no chance for me." Oh! young man, cheer up, I will tell you how you can make your fortune. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all other things will be added. I know you do not want to be mean in this matter. You will not empty the brimming cup of life, and then pour the dregs on God's altar. To a generous Saviour you will not act like that; you have not the heart to act like that. That is not manly. That is not honorable. That is not brave. Your great want is a new heart, and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ I tell you so to-day, and the blessed Spirit presses through the solemnities of this hour to put the cup of life to your thirsty lips. Oh! thrust it not back. Mercy presents it—bleeding mercy, long-suffering Mercy. Despise all other friendships, prove recreant to all other bargains, but despise God's love for your dying soul—do not do that. There comes a crisis in a man's life, and the trouble is he does not know it is the crisis. I got a letter this week I thought to have brought it with me to church and read you a portion of it—in which a man says to me:

"I start out now to preach the gospel of righteousness and temperance to the people. Do you remember me? I am the man who appeared at the close of the service when you were worshipping in the chapel after you came from Philadelphia. Do you remember at the close of the service a man coming up to you all a tremble with conviction, and crying out for mercy, and telling you he had a very bad business, and he thought he would change it? That was the turning point in my history. I gave up my bad business. I gave my heart to God, and the desire to serve Him has grown upon me all these years, until now woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel."

That Sunday night, in the chapel, now the Lay College was the turning point in that young man's history. This very Sabbath hour will be the turning point in the history of a hundred young men in this house. God help us. I once stood on an anniversary platform with a clergyman who told this marvelous story. He said:

"Thirty years ago two young men started out to attend Park Theater, New York, to see a play which made religion ridiculous and hypocritical. They had been brought up in Christian families. They started for the theater to see that vile play, and their early convictions came back upon them. They felt it was not right to go, but still they went. They came to the door of the theatre. One of the young men stopped and started for home, but returned and came up to the door, but had not the courage to go in. He again started for home, and went home. The other young man went in. He went from one degree of temptation to another. Caught in the whirl of frivolity and sin, he sank lower and lower. He lost his business position. He lost his morals. He lost his soul. He died a dreadful death, not one star of mercy shining on it. I stand before you to-day," said that minister, "to thank God that for twenty years I have been permitted to preach the Gospel. I am the other young man."

Oh! you see that was the turning point—the one went back, the other went on. That great roaring world of New York life will soon break in upon you, young men. Will the wild wave dash out the impressions of this day as an ocean billow dashes letters out of the sand on the beach? You need something better than this world can give you. I beat on your heart and it sounds hollow. You want something great and grand and glorious to fill it, and here is the religion that can do it. God save you!

THE VOICES OF THE STREET.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE VOICES OF THE STREET.

Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets.—Prov. i: 20

We are all ready to listen to the voices of nature—the voices of the mountain, the voices of the sea, the voices of the storm, the voices of the star. As in some of the cathedrals in Europe, there is an organ at either end of the building, and the one instrument responds musically to the other, so in the great cathedral of nature, day responds to day, and night to night, and flower to flower, and star to star, in the great harmonies of the universe. The spring time is an evangelist in blossoms preaching of God's love; and the winter is a prophet—white bearded—denouncing woe against our sins. We are all ready to listen to the voices of nature; but how few of us learn anything from the voices of the noisy and dusty street. You go to your mechanism, and to your work, and to your merchandise, and you come back again—and often with how different a heart you pass through the streets. Are there no things for us to learn from these pavements over which we pass? Are there no tufts of truth growing up between these cobblestones, beaten with the feet of toil, and pain, and pleasure, the slow tread of old age, and the quick step of childhood? Aye, there are great harvests to be reaped; and this morning I thrust in the sickle because the harvest is ripe. "Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets."

In the first place, the street impresses me with the fact that *this life is a scene of toil and struggle.* By ten o'clock every day the city is jarring with wheels, and shuffling with feet, and humming with voices, and covered with the breath of smoke-stacks, and arush with traffickers. Once in awhile you find a man going along with folded arms and with leisure step, as though he had nothing to do; but for the most part, as you find men going down these streets on the way to business, there is anxiety in their faces, as though they had some errand which must be executed at the first possible moment. You are jostled by those who have bargains to make and notes to sell. Up this ladder with a hod of bricks, out of this bank with a roll of bills, on this dray with a load of goods, digging a cellar, or shingling a roof, or shoeing a horse, or building a wall, or mending a watch, or binding a book. Industry, with her thousand arms and thousand eyes, and thousand feet, goes on singing her song of work! work! work! while the mills drum it, and the steam-whistles fife it. All this is not because men love toil. Some one remarked: "Every man is as lazy as he can afford to be." But it is because necessity with stern brow and with uplifted whip, stands over you ready whenever you relax your toil to make your shoulders sting with the lash. Can it be that passing up and down these streets on your way to work and business that you do not learn anything of the world's toil, and anxiety, and struggle? Oh! how many drooping hearts, how many eyes on the watch, how many miles traveled, how many burdens carried, how many losses suffered, how many battles fought, how many victories gained, how many defeats suffered, how many exasperations endured—what losses, what hunger, what wretchedness, what pallor, what disease, what agony, what despair!

Sometimes I have stopped at the corner of the street as the multitudes went hither and yon, and it has seemed to be a great pantomine, and as I looked upon it my heart broke. This great tide of human life that goes down the street is a rapid, tossed, and turned aside, and dashed ahead, and driven back—beautiful in its confusion, and confused in its beauty. In the carpeted aisles of the forest, in the woods from which the eternal shadow is never lifted, on the shore of the sea over whose iron coast tosses the tangled foam sprinkling the cracked cliffs with a baptism of whirlwind and tempest, is the best place to study God; but in the rushing, swarming raving street is the best place to study man. Going down to your place of business and coming home again, I charge you look about—see these signs of poverty, of wretchedness, of hunger, of sin, of bereavement—and as you go through the streets, and come back through the streets, gather up in the arms of your prayer all the sorrow, all the losses, all the sufferings, all the bereavements of those whom you pass, and present them in prayer before an all-sympathetic God. In the great day of eternity there will be thousands of persons with whom you in this world never exchanged one word, will rise up and call you blessed; and there will be a thousand fingers pointed at you in heaven, saying: "That is the man, that is the woman, who helped me when I was hungry, and sick, and wandering, and lost, and heart-broken. That is the man, that is the woman," and the blessing will come down upon you as Christ shall say: "I was hungry and ye fed me, I was naked and ye clothed me, I was sick and in prison and ye visited me; inasmuch as ye did it to these poor waifs of the streets, ye did it to Me."

Again, the street impresses me with the fact that *all* *classes and conditions of society must commingle.* We sometimes culture a wicked exclusiveness. Intellect despises ignorance. Refinement will have nothing to do with boorishness. Gloves hate the sunburned hand, and the high forehead despises the flat head; and the trim hedgerow will have nothing to do with the wild copsewood, and the Athens hates Nazareth. This ought not so to be. The astronomer must come down from his starry revelry and help us in our navigation. The surgeon must come away from his study of the human organism and set our broken bones. The chemist must come away from his laboratory, where he has been studying analysis and synthesis, and help us to understand the nature of the soils. I bless God that all classes of people are compelled to meet on the street. The glittering coach-wheel clashes against the scavenger's cart. Fine robes run against the pedlar's pack. Robust health meets wan sickness. Honesty confronts fraud. Every class of people meets every other class. Impudence and modesty, pride and humility, purity and beastliness, frankness and hypocrisy, meeting on the same block, in the same street, in the same city. Oh! that is what Solomon meant when he said: "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all." I like this democratic principle of the Gospel of Jesus Christ which recognizes the fact that we stand before God on one and the same platform. Do not take on any airs; whatever position you have gained in society, you are nothing but a man, born of the same parent, regenerated by the same Spirit, cleansed in the same blood, to lie down in the same dust, to get up in the same resurrection. It is high time that we all acknowledged not only the Fatherhood of God, but the brotherhood of man.

Again, the street impresses me with the fact that ***it is*** *a very hard thing for a man to keep his heart right and to get to heaven.* Infinite temptations spring upon us from these places of public concourse. Amid so much affluence how much temptation to covetousness, and to be discontented with our humble lot. Amid so many opportunities for over-reaching, what temptation to extortion. Amid so much display, what temptation to vanity. Amid so many saloons of strong drink, what allurement to dissipation. In the maelstroms and hell gates of the street, how many make quick and eternal shipwreck. If a man-of-war comes back from a battle, and is towed into the navy-yard, we go down to look at the splintered spars and count the bullet-holes, and look with patriotic admiration on the flag that floated in victory from the masthead. But that man is more of a curiosity who has gone through thirty years of the sharp-shooting of business life, and yet sails on, victor over the temptations of the street. Oh! how many have gone down under the pressure, leaving not so much as the patch of canvas to tell where they perished. They never had any peace. Their dishonesties kept tolling in their ears. If I had an axe, and could split open the beams of that fine house, perhaps I would find in the very heart of it a skeleton. In his very best wine there is a smack of poor man's sweat. Oh! is it strange that when a man has devoured widows' houses, he is disturbed with indigestion? All the forces of nature are against him. The floods are ready to drown him, and the earthquake to swallow him, and the fires to consume him, and the lightnings to smite him. Aye, all the armies of God are on the street, and in the day when the crowns of heaven are distributed, some of the brightest of them will be given to those men who were faithful to God and faithful to the souls of others amid the marts of business, proving themselves the heroes of the street. Mighty were their temptations, mighty was their deliverance, and mighty shall be their triumph.

Again, the street impresses me with the fact that *life is full of pretension and sham.* What subterfuge, what double dealing, what two-facedness. Do all people who wish you good morning really hope for you a happy day? Do all the people who shake hands love each other? Are all those anxious about your health who inquire concerning it? Do all want to see you who ask you to call? Does all the world know half as much as it pretends to know? Is there not many a wretched stock of goods with a brilliant store window? Passing up and down these streets to your business and your work, are you not impressed with the fact that society is hollow, and that there are subterfuges and pretensions? Oh! how many there are who swagger and strut, and how few people who are natural and walk. While fops simper, and fools chuckle, and simpletons giggle, how few people are natural and laugh. The courtesan and the libertine go down the street in beautiful apparel, while within the heart there are volcanoes of passion consuming their life away. I say these things not to create in you incredulity or misanthropy, nor do I forget there are thousands of people a great deal better than they seem; but I do not think any man so prepared for the conflict of this life until he knows this particular peril. Ehud comes pretending to pay his tax to king Eglon, and while he stands in front of the king, stabs him through with a dagger until the haft went in after the blade. Judas Iscariot kissed Christ.

Again, the street impresses me with the fact that it is *a great field for Christian charity.* There are hunger and suffering, and want and wretchedness, in the country; but these evils chiefly congregate in our great cities. On every street crime prowls, and drunkenness staggers, and shame winks, and pauperism thrusts out its hand asking for alms. Here, want is most squalid and hunger is most lean. A Christian man, going along a street in New York, saw a poor lad, and he stooped and said: "My boy, do you know how to read and write?" The boy made no answer. The man asked the question twice and thrice: "Can you read and write?" and then the boy answered, with a tear plashing on the back of his hand. He said in defiance: "No, sir; I can't read nor write, neither. God, sir, don't want me to read and write. Didn't He take away my father so long ago I never remember to have seen him? and haven't I had to go along the streets to get something to fetch home to eat for the folks? and didn't I, as soon as I could carry a basket, have to go out and pick up cinders, and never have no schooling, sir? God don't want me to read, sir. I can't read, nor write neither." Oh, these poor wanderers! They have no chance. Born in degradation, as they get up from their hands and knees to walk, they take their first step on the road to despair. Let us go forth in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to rescue them. Let us ministers not be afraid of soiling our black clothes while we go down on that mission. While we are tying an elaborate knot in our cravat, or while we are in the study rounding off some period rhetorically, we might be saving a soul from death, and hiding a multitude of sins. O Christian laymen, go out on this work. If you are not willing to go forth yourself, then give of your means; and if you are too lazy to go, and if you are too stingy to help, then get out of the way, and hide yourself in the dens and caves of the earth, lest, when Christ's chariot comes along, the horses' hoofs trample you into the mire. Beware lest the thousands of the destitute of your city, in the last great day, rise up and curse your stupidity and your neglect. Down to work! Lift them up! One cold winter's day, as a Christian man was going along the Battery in New York, he saw a little girl seated at the gate, shivering in the cold. He said to her: "My child, what do you sit there for, this cold day?" "Oh," she replied, "I am waiting—I am waiting for somebody to come and take care of me." "Why," said the man, "what makes you think anybody will come and take care of you?" "Oh," she said, "my mother died last week, and I was crying very much, and she said: 'Don't cry, dear; though I am gone and your father is gone, the Lord will send somebody to take care of you.' My mother never told a lie; she said some one would come and take care of me, and I am waiting for them to come." O yes, they are waiting for you. Men who have money, men who have influence, men of churches, men of great hearts, gather them in, gather them in. It is not the will of your Heavenly Father that one of these little ones should perish.

Lastly, the street impresses me with the fact that *all the people are looking forward.* I see expectancy written on almost every face I meet between here and Fulton ferry, or walking the whole length of Broadway. Where you find a thousand people walking straight on, you only find one man stopping and looking back. The fact is, God made us all to look ahead, because we are immortal. In this tramp of the multitude on the streets, I hear the tramp of a great host, marching and marching for eternity. Beyond the office, the store, the shop, the street, there is a world, populous and tremendous. Through God's grace, may you reach that blessed place. A great throng fills those boulevards, and the streets are arush with the chariots of conquerors. The inhabitants go up and down, but they never weep and they never toil. A river flows through that city, with rounded and luxurious banks, and trees of life laden with everlasting fruitage bend their branches to dip the crystal. No plumed hearse rattles over that pavement, for they are never sick. With immortal health glowing in every vein they know not how to die. Those towers of strength, those palaces of beauty, gleam in the light of a sun that never sets. Oh, heaven, beautiful heaven! Heaven, where our friends are. They take no census in that city, for it is inhabited by "a multitude which no man can number." Rank above rank. Host above host. Gallery above gallery, sweeping all around the heavens. Thousands of thousands. Millions of millions. Quadrillions of quadrillions. Quintillions of quintillions. Blessed are they who enter in through the gate into that city. Oh! start for it this morning. Through the blood of the great sacrifice of the Son of God, take up your march for heaven. The spirit and the bride say come, and whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life "freely." Join this great throng who this morning, for the first time, espouse their faith in Christ. All the doors of invitation are open. "And I saw twelve gates, and they were twelve pearls."

CHAPTER XVII.

HEROES IN COMMON LIFE.

Thou, therefore, endure hardness.—II. Timothy ii: 3.

Historians are not slow to acknowledge the merits of great military chieftains. We have the full-length portraits of the Cromwells, the Washingtons, the Napoleons, and the Wellingtons of the world. History is not written in black ink, but with red ink of human blood. The gods of human ambition do not drink from bowls made out of silver, or gold, or precious stones, but out of the bleached skulls of the fallen. But I am now to unroll before you a scroll of heroes that the world has never acknowledged; those who faced no guns, blew no bugle-blast, conquered no cities, chained no captives to their chariot-wheels, and yet, in the great day of eternity, will stand higher than those whose names startled the nations; and seraph, and rapt spirit, and archangel will tell their deeds to a listening universe. I mean the heroes of common, every-day life.

In this roll, in the first place, I find all the heroes of the sick room. When Satan had failed to overcome Job, he said to God, "Put forth thy hand and touch his bones and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face." Satan had found out what we have all found out, that sickness is the greatest test of one's character. A man who can stand that can stand anything. To be shut in a room as fast as though it were a bastile. To be so nervous you cannot endure the tap of a child's foot. To have luxuriant fruit, which tempts the appetite of the robust and healthy, excite our loathing and disgust when it first appears on the platter. To have the rapier of pain strike through the side, or across the temples, like a razor, or to put the foot into a vice, or throw the whole body into a blaze of fever. Yet there have been men and women, but more women than men, who have cheerfully endured this hardness. Through years of exhausting rheumatisms and excruciating neuralgias they have gone, and through bodily distresses that rasped the nerves, and tore the muscles, and paled the cheeks, and stooped the shoulders. By the dim light of the sick room taper they saw on their wall the picture of that land where the inhabitants are never sick. Through the dead silence of the night they heard the chorus of the angels. The cancer ate away her life from week to week and day to day, and she became weaker and weaker, and every "good night" was feebler than the "good night" before—yet never sad. The children looked up into her face and saw suffering transformed into a heavenly smile. Those who suffered on the battle-field, amid shot and shell, were not so much heroes and heroines as those who in the field hospital and in the asylum had fevers which no ice could cool and no surgery could cure. No shout of comrade to cheer them, but numbness, and aching, and homesickness—yet willing to suffer, confident in God, hopeful of heaven. Heroes of rheumatism. Heroes of neuralgia. Heroes of spinal complaint. Heroes of sick headache. Heroes of lifelong invalidism. Heroes and heroines. They shall reign for ever and for ever.

Hark! I catch just one note of the eternal anthem: "There shall be no more pain." Bless God for that.

In this roll I also find the heroes of toil, who do their work uncomplainingly. It is comparatively easy to lead a regiment into battle when you know that the whole nation will applaud the victory; it is comparatively easy to doctor the sick when you know that your skill will be appreciated by a large company of friends and relatives; it is comparatively easy to address an audience when in the gleaming eyes and the flushed cheeks you know that your sentiments are adopted; but to do sewing where you expect that the employer will come and thrust his thumb through the work to show how imperfect it is, or to have the whole garment thrown back on you to be done over again; to build a wall and know there will be no one to say you did it well, but only a swearing employer howling across the scaffold; to work until your eyes are dim and your back aches, and your heart faints, and to know that if you stop before night your children will starve. Ah! the sword has not slain so many as the needle. The great battle-fields of our last war were not Gettysburg and Shiloh and South Mountain. The great battle-fields of the last war were in the arsenals, and in the shops and in the attics, where women made army jackets for a sixpence. They toiled on until they died. They had no funeral eulogium, but in the name of my God, this morning, I enroll their names among those of whom the world was not worthy. Heroes of the needle. Heroes of the sewing-machine. Heroes of the attic. Heroes of the cellar. Heroes and heroines. Bless God for them.

In this roll I also find the heroes who have uncomplainingly endured domestic injustices. There are men who for their toil and anxiety have no sympathy in their homes. Exhausting application to business gets them a livelihood, but an unfrugal wife scatters it. He is fretted at from the moment he enters the door until he comes out of it. The exasperations of business life augmented by the exasperations of domestic life. Such men are laughed at, but they have a heart-breaking trouble, and they would have long ago gone into appalling dissipations but for the grace of God. Society today is strewn with the wrecks of men who under the north-east storm of domestic infelicity have been driven on the rocks. There are tens of thousands of drunkards in this country to-day, made such by their wives. That is not poetry! That is prose! But the wrong is generally in the opposite direction. You would not have to go far to find a wife whose life is a perpetual martyrdom. Something heavier than a stroke of the fist; unkind words, staggerings home at midnight, and constant maltreatment, which have left her only a wreck of what she was on that day when in the midst of a brilliant assemblage the vows were taken, and full organ played the wedding march, and the carriage rolled away with the benediction of the people. What was the burning of Latimer and Ridley at the stake compared with this? Those men soon became unconscious in the fire, but here is a fifty years' martyrdom, a fifty years' putting to death, yet uncomplaining. No bitter words when the rollicking companions at two o'clock in the morning pitch the husband dead drunk into the front entry. No bitter words when wiping from the swollen brow the blood struck out in a midnight carousal. Bending over the battered and bruised form of him who, when he took her from her father's home, promised love, and kindness, and protection, yet nothing but sympathy, and prayers, and forgiveness before they are asked for. No bitter words when the family Bible goes for rum, and the pawnbroker's shop gets the last decent dress. Some day, desiring to evoke the story of her sorrows, you say: "Well, how are you getting along now?" and rallying her trembling voice, and quieting her quivering lip, she says: "Pretty well, I thank you, pretty well." She never will tell you. In the delirium of her last sickness she may tell all the secrets of her lifetime, but she will not tell that. Not until the books of eternity are opened on the thrones of judgment will ever be known what she has suffered. Oh! ye who are twisting a garland for the victor, put it on that pale brow. When she is dead the neighbors will beg linen to make her a shroud, and she will be carried out in a plain box with no silver plate to tell her years, for she has lived a thousand years of trial and anguish. The gamblers and swindlers who destroyed her husband will not come to the funeral. One carriage will be enough for that funeral—one carriage to carry the orphans and the two Christian women who presided over the obsequies. But there is a flash, and the opening of a celestial door, and a shout: "Lift up your head, ye everlasting gate, and let her come in!" And Christ will step forth and say: "Come in! ye suffered with me on earth, be glorified with me in heaven." What is the highest throne in heaven? You say: "The throne of the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb." No doubt about it. What is the next highest throne in heaven? While I speak it seems to me that it will be the throne of the drunkard's wife, if she, with cheerful patience, endured all her earthly torture. Heroes and heroines.

I find also in this roll the heroes of Christian charity. We all admire the George Peabodys and the James Lenoxes of the earth, who give tens and hundreds of thousands of dollars to good objects. A few days ago Moses H. Grinnell was buried, and the most significant thing about the ceremonies, as I read them, was that there was no sermon and no oration; a plain hymn, a prayer, and a benediction. Well, I said, that is very beautiful. All Christendom pronounces the eulogium of Moses H. Grinnell, and the icebergs that stand as monuments to Franklin and his men will stand as the monuments of this great merchant, and the sunlight that plays upon the glittering cliff will write his epitaph. But I am speaking this morning of those who, out of their pinched poverty, help others—of such men as those Christian missionaries at the West, who are living on $250 a year that they may proclaim Christ to the people, one of them, writing to the secretary in New York, saying: "I thank you for that $25. Until yesterday we have had no meat in our house for three months. We have suffered terribly. My children have no shoes this winter." And of those people who have only a half loaf of bread, but give a piece of it to others who are hungrier; and of those who have only a scuttle of coal, but help others to fuel; and of those who have only a dollar in their pocket, and give twenty-five cents to somebody else; and of that father who wears a shabby coat, and of that mother who wears a faded dress, that their children may be well apparelled. You call them paupers, or ragmuffins, or emigrants. I call them heroes and heroines. You and I may not know where they live, or what their name is. God knows, and they have more angels hovering over them than you and I have, and they will have a higher seat in heaven.

They may have only a cup of cold water to give a poor traveler, or may have only picked a splinter from under the nail of a child's finger, or have put only two mites into the treasury, but the Lord knows them. Considering what they had, they did more than we have ever done, and their faded dress will become a white robe, and the small room will be an eternal mansion, and the old hat will be a coronet of victory, and all the applause of earth and all the shouting of heaven will be drowned out when God rises up to give his reward to those humble workers in his kingdom, and to say to them: "Well done, good and faithful servant." You have all seen or heard of the ruin of Melrose Abbey. I suppose in some respects it is the most exquisite ruin on earth. And yet, looking at it I was not so impressed—you may set it down to bad taste—but I was not so deeply stirred as I was at a tombstone at the foot of that abbey—the tombstone placed by Walter Scott over the grave of an old man who had served him for a good many years in his house—the inscription most significant, and I defy any man to stand there and read it without tears coming into his eyes—the epitaph: "Well done, good and faithful servant." Oh! when our work is over, will it be found that because of anything we have done for God, or the church, or suffering humanity, that such an inscription is appropriate for us? God grant it.

Who are those who were bravest and deserved the greatest monument—Lord Claverhouse and his burly soldiers, or John Brown, the Edinburgh carrier, and his wife? Mr. Atkins, the persecuted minister of Jesus Christ in Scotland, was secreted by John Brown and his wife, and Claverhouse rode up one day with his armed men and shouted in front of the house. John Brown's little girl came out. He said to her: "Well, miss, is Mr. Atkins here?" She made no answer, for she could not betray the minister of the Gospel. "Ha!" Claverhouse said, "then you are a chip of the old block, are you? I have something in my pocket for you. It is a nosegay. Some people call it a thumbscrew, but I call it a nosegay." And he got off his horse, and he put it on the little girl's hand, and began to turn it until the bones cracked, and she cried. He said, "Don't cry, don't cry; this isn't a thumbscrew; this is a nosegay." And they heard the child's cry, and the father and mother came out, and Claverhouse said, "Ha! it seems that you three have laid your holy heads together determined to die like all the rest of your hypocritical, canting, snivelling crew; rather than give up good Mr. Atkins, pious Mr. Atkins, you would die. I have a telescope with me that will improve your vision," and he pulled out a pistol. "Now," he said, "you old pragmatical, lest you should catch cold in this cold morning of Scotland, and for the honor and safety of the king, to say nothing of the glory of God and the good of our souls, I will proceed simply and in the neatest and most expeditious style possible to blow your brains out." John Brown fell upon his knees and began to pray. "Ah!" said Claverhouse, "look out, if you are going to pray; steer clear of the king, the council, and Richard Cameron." "O! Lord," said John Brown, "since it seems to be thy will that I should leave this world for a world where I can love thee better and serve thee more, I put this poor widow woman and these helpless, fatherless children into thy hands. We have been together in peace a good while, but now we must look forth to a better meeting in heaven, and as for these poor creatures, blindfolded and infatuated, that stand before me, convert them before it be too late, and may they who have sat in judgment in this lonely place on this blessed morning, upon me, a poor, defenceless fellow-creature—may they, in the last judgment find that mercy which they have refused to me, thy most unworthy, but faithful servant. Amen." He rose up and said, "Isabel, the hour has come of which I spoke to you on the morning when I proposed hand and heart to you; and are you willing now, for the love of God, to let me die?" She put her arms around him and said:—"The

Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!" "Stop that snivelling," said Claverhouse. "I have had enough of it. Soldiers, do your work. Take aim! Fire!" and the head of John Brown was scattered on the ground. While the wife was gathering up in her apron the fragments of her husband's head—gathering them up for burial—Claverhouse looked into her face and said, "Now, my good woman, how do you feel now about your bonnie man?" "Oh!" she said, "I always thought weel of him; he has been very good to me; I had no reason for thinking anything but weel of him, and I think better of him now." Oh! what a grand thing it will be in the last day to see God pick out his heroes and heroines. Who are those paupers of eternity trudging off from the gates of heaven? Who are they? The Lord Claverhouses and the Herods and those who had sceptres, and crowns, and thrones, but they lived for their own aggrandisement, and they broke the heart of nations. Heroes of earth, but paupers in eternity. I beat the drums of their eternal despair. Woe! woe! woe!

But there is great excitement in heaven. Why those long processions? Why the booming of that great bell in the tower? It is coronation day in heaven.

Who are those rising on the thrones, with crowns of eternal royalty? They must have been great people on earth, world-renowned people. No. They taught in a ragged school. Taught in a ragged school! Is that all? That is all. Who are those souls waving sceptres of eternal dominion? Why, they were little children who waited on invalid mothers. That all? That is all. She was called "Little Mary" on earth. She is an empress now. Who are that great multitude on the highest thrones of heaven? Who are they? Why, they fed the hungry, they clothed the naked, they healed the sick, they comforted the heart-broken. They never found any rest until they put their head down on the pillow of the sepulchre. God watched them. God laughed defiance at the enemies who put their heels hard down on these His dear children; and one day the Lord struck His hand so hard on His thigh that the omnipotent sword rattled in the buckler, as He said: "I am their God, and no weapon formed against them shall prosper." What harm can the world do you when the Lord Almighty with unsheathed sword fights for you?

I preach this sermon this morning in comfort. Go home to the place just where God has put you to play the hero or the heroine. Do not envy any man his money, or his applause, or his social position. Do not envy any woman her wardrobe, or her exquisite appearance. Be the hero or the heroine. If there be no flour in the house, and you do not know where your children are to get bread, listen, and you will hear something tapping against the window-pane. Go to the window and you will find it is the beak of a raven, and open the window, and there will fly in the messenger that fed Elijah. Do you think that the God who grows the cotton of the South will let you freeze for lack of clothes? Do you think that the God who allowed the disciples on Sunday morning to go into the grain-field, and then take the grain and rub it in their hands and eat—do you think God will let you starve? Did you ever hear the experience of that old man: "I have been young, and now am I old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, or his seed begging bread"? Get up out of your discouragement, O! troubled soul, O! sewing woman, O! man, kicked and cuffed by unjust employers, O! ye who are hard beset in the battle of life and know not which way to turn, O! you bereft one, O! you sick one with complaints you have told to no one, come and get the comfort of this subject. Listen to our great Captain's cheer: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the fruit of the tree of life which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE MIDNIGHT HORSEMAN.

Then I went up in the night by the brook and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and so returned.—Nehemiah ii: 15.

A dead city is more suggestive than a living city—past Rome than present Rome—ruins rather than newly frescoed cathedral. But the best time to visit a ruin is by moonlight. The Coliseum is far more fascinating to the traveler after sundown than before. You may stand by daylight amid the monastic ruins of Melrose Abbey, and study shafted oriel, and rosetted stone and mullion, but they throw their strongest witchery by moonlight. Some of you remember what the enchanter of Scotland said in the "Lay of the Last Minstrel:"

> "Wouldst thou view fair Melrose aright,
> Go visit it by the pale moolight."

Washington Irving describes the Andalusian moonlight upon the Alhambra ruins as amounting to an enchantment. My text presents you Jerusalem in ruins. The tower down. The gates down. The walls down. Everything down. Nehemiah on horseback, by moonlight looking upon the ruins. While he rides, there are some friends on foot going with him, for they do not want the many horses to disturb the suspicions of the people. These people do not know the secret of Nehemiah's heart, but they are going as a sort of body-guard.

I hear the clicking hoofs of the horse on which Nehemiah rides, as he guides it this way and that, into this gate and out of that, winding through that gate amid the *debris* of once great Jerusalem. Now the horse comes to a dead halt at the tumbled masonry where he cannot pass. Now he shies off at the charred timbers. Now he comes along where the water under the moonlight flashes from the mouth of the brazen dragon after which the gate was named. Heavy-hearted Nehemiah! Riding in and out, now by his old home desolated, now by the defaced Temple, now amid the scars of the city that had gone down under battering-ram and conflagration. The escorting party knows not what Nehemiah means. Is he getting crazy? Have his own personal sorrows, added to the sorrows of the nation, unbalanced his intellect? Still the midnight exploration goes on. Nehemiah on horseback rides through the fish gate, by the tower of the furnaces, by the king's pool, by the dragon well, in and out, in and out, until the midnight ride is completed, and Nehemiah dismounts from his horse, and to the amazed and confounded and incredulous body-guard, declares the dead secret of his heart when he says: "Come, now, let us build Jerusalem." "What, Nehemiah, have you any money?" "No." "Have you any kingly authority?" "No." "Have you any eloquence?" "No." Yet that midnight, moonlight ride of Nehemiah resulted in the glorious rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem. The people knew not how the thing was to be done, but with great enthusiasm they cried out: "Let us rise up now and build the city." Some people laughed and said it could not be done. Some people were infuriate and offered physical violence, saying the thing should not be done. But the workmen went right on, standing on the wall, trowel in one hand, sword in the other, until the work was gloriously completed. At that very time, in Greece, Xenophon was writing a history, and Plato was making philosophy, and Demosthenes was rattling his rhetorical thunder; but all of them together did not do so much for the world as this midnight, moonlight ride of praying, courageous, homesick, close-mouthed Nehemiah.

My subject first impresses me with the idea what an intense thing is church affection. Seize the bridle of that horse and stop Nehemiah. Why are you risking your life here in the night? Your horse will stumble over these ruins and fall on you. Stop this useless exposure of your life. No; Nehemiah will not stop. He at last tells us the whole story. He lets us know he was an exile in a far distant land, and he was a servant, a cup-bearer in the palace of Artaxerxes Longimanus, and one day, while he was handing the cup of wine to the king, the king said to him, "What is the matter with you? You are not sick. I know you must have some great trouble. What is the matter with you?" Then he told the king how that beloved Jerusalem was broken down; how that his father's tomb had been desecrated; how that the Temple had been dishonored and defaced; how that the walls were scattered and broken. "Well," says King Artaxerxes, "what do you want?" "Well," said the cup-bearer Nehemiah, "I want to go home. I want to fix up the grave of my father. I want to restore the beauty of the Temple. I want to rebuild the masonry of the city wall. Besides, I want passports so that I shall not be hindered in my journey. And besides that," as you will find in the context, "I want an order on the man who keeps your forest for just so much timber as I may need for the rebuilding of the city." "How long shall you be gone?" said the king. The time of absence is arranged. In hot haste this seeming adventurer comes to Jerusalem, and in my text we find him on horseback, in the midnight, riding around the ruins. It is through the spectacles of this scene that we discover the ardent attachment of Nehemiah for sacred Jerusalem, which in all ages has been the type of the church of God, our Jerusalem, which we love just as much as Nehemiah loved his Jerusalem. The fact is that you love the church of God so much that there is no spot on earth so sacred, unless it be your own fireside. The church has been to you so much comfort and illumination that there is nothing that makes you so irate as to have it talked against. If there have been times when you have been carried into captivity by sickness, you longed for the Church, our holy Jerusalem, just as much as Nehemiah longed for his Jerusalem, and the first day you came out you came to the house of the Lord. When the temple was in ruins, as ours was five years ago, like Nehemiah, you walked around and looked at it, and in the moonlight you stood listening if you could not hear the voice of the dead organ, the psalm of the expired Sabbaths. What Jerusalem was to Nehemiah, the Church of God is to you. Sceptics and infidels may scoff at the Church as an obsolete affair, as a relic of the dark ages, as a convention of goody-goody people, but all the impression they have ever made on your mind against the Church of God is absolutely nothing. You would make more sacrifices for it to-day than for any other institution, and if it were needful you would die in its defence. You can take the words of the kingly poet as he said: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." You understand in your own experience the pathos, the home-sickness, the courage, the holy enthusiasm of Nehemiah in his midnight moonlight ride around the ruins of his beloved Jerusalem.

Again, my text impresses me with the fact that, before reconstruction, there must be an exploration of ruins. Why was not Nehemiah asleep under the covers? Why was not his horse stabled in the midnight? Let the police of the city arrest this midnight rider, out on some mischief. No. Nehemiah is going to rebuild the city, and he is making the preliminary exploration. In this gate, out that gate, east, west, north, south. All through the ruins. The ruins must be explored before the work of reconstruction can begin. The reason that so many people in this day, apparently converted, do not stay converted is because they did not first explore the ruins of their own heart. The reason that there are so many professed Christians who in this day lie and forge and steal, and commit adultery, and go to the penitentiary, is because they first do not learn the ruin of their own heart. They have not found out that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." They had an idea that they were almost right, and they built religion as a sort of extension, as an ornamental cupola. There was a superstructure of religion built on a substratum of unrepented sins. The trouble with a good deal of modern theology is that instead of building on the right foundation, it builds on the *debris* of an unregenerated nature. They attempt to rebuild Jerusalem before, in the midnight of conviction, they have seen the ghastliness of the ruin. They have such a poor foundation for their religion that the first north-east storm of temptation blows them down. I have no faith in a man's conversion if he is not converted in the old-fashioned way—John Bunyan's way, John Wesley's way, John Calvin's way. Paul's way, Christ's way, God's way.

A dentist said to me a few days ago, "Does that hurt?" Said I, "Of course it hurts. It is in your business as in my profession. We have to hurt before we can help." You will never understand redemption until you understand ruin. A man tells me that some one is a member of the church. It makes no impression on my mind at all. I simply want to know whether he was converted in the old-fashioned way, or whether he was converted in the new-fashioned way. If he was converted in the old-fashioned way he will stand. If he was converted in the new-fashioned way he will not stand. That is all there is about it. A man comes to me to talk about religion. The first question I ask him is, "Do you feel yourself to be a sinner?" If he say, "Well, I—yes," the hesitancy makes me feel that that man wants a ride on Nehemiah's horse by midnight through the ruins—in by the gate of his affections, out by the gate of his will; and before he has got through with that midnight ride he will drop the reins on the horse's neck, and will take his right hand and smite on his heart and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" and before he has stabled his horse he will take his feet out of the stirrups, and he will slide down on the ground, and he will kneel, crying, "Have mercy on me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies; blot out my transgressions, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sins are ever before thee." Ah, my friends, you see this is not a complimentary gospel. That is what makes some people so mad. It comes to a man of a million dollars, and impenitent in his sins, and says, "You're a pauper." It comes to a woman of fairest cheek, who has never repented, and says, "You're a sinner." It comes to a man priding himself on his independence, and says, "You're bound hand and foot by the devil." It comes to our entire race and says, "You're a ruin, a ghastly ruin, an illimitable ruin." Satan sometimes says to me, "Why do you preach that truth? Why don't you preach a gospel with no repentance in it? Why don't you flatter men's hearts so that you make them feel all right? Why don't you preach a humanitarian gospel with no repentance in it, saying nothing about the ruin, talking all the time about redemption? Instead of preaching to five thousand you might preach to twenty thousand, for there would be four times as many who would come to hear a popular truth as to hear an unpopular truth, and you have voice enough to make them hear." I say, "Get thee behind me, Satan." I would rather lead five souls into heaven than twenty thousand into hell. The redemption of the gospel is a perfect farce if there is no ruin. "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "If any one, though he be an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel than this," says the apostle, "let him be accursed." There must be the midnight ride over the ruins before Jerusalem can be built There must be the clicking of the hoofs before there can be the ring of the trowels.

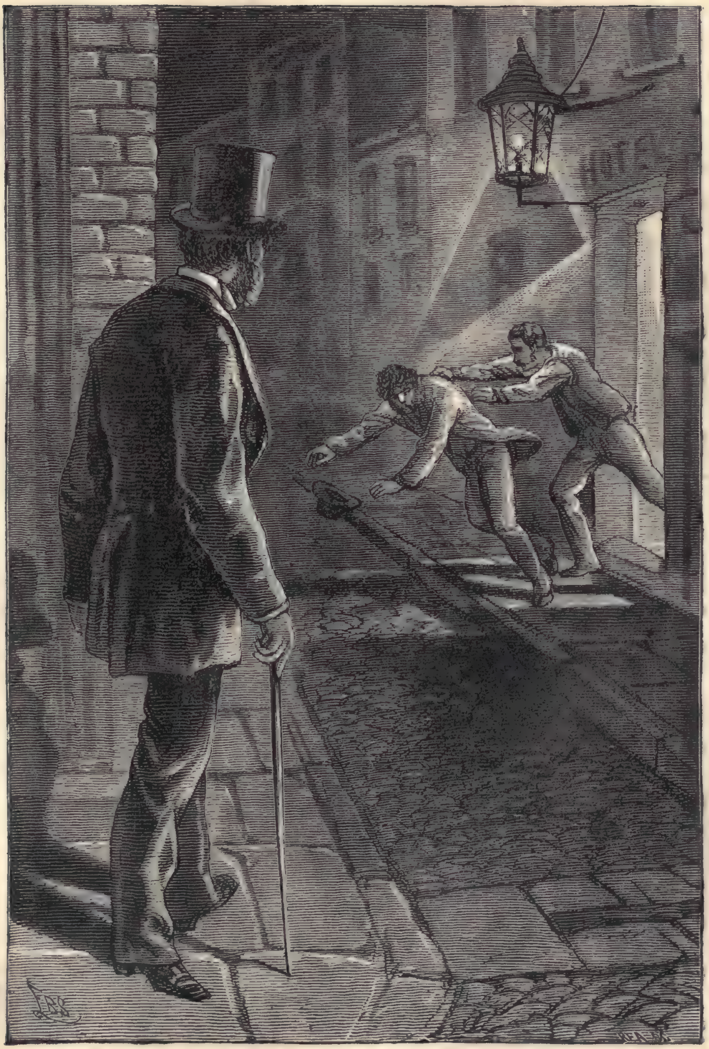
Again. My subject gives me a specimen of busy and triumphant sadness. If there was any man in the world who had a right to mope and give up everything as lost, it was Nehemiah. You say, "He was a cupbearer in the palace of Shushan, and it was a grand place." So it was. The hall of that palace was two hundred feet square, and the roof hovered over thirty-six marble pillars, each pillar sixty feet high; and the intense blue of the sky, and the deep green of the forest foliage, and the white of the driven snow, all hung trembling in the upholstery. But, my friends, you know very well that fine architecture will not put down home-sickness. Yet Nehemiah did not give up. Then when you see him going among these desolated streets, and by these dismantled towers, and by the torn-up grave of his father, you would suppose that he would have been disheartened, and that he would have dismounted from his horse and gone to his room and said: "Woe is me! My father's grave is torn up. The temple is dishonored. The walls are broken down. I have no money with which to rebuild. I wish I had never been born. I wish I were dead." Not so says Nehemiah. Although he had a grief so intense that it excited the commentary of his king, yet that penniless, expatriated Nehemiah rouses himself up to rebuild the city. He gets his permission of absence. He gets his passports. He hastens away to Jerusalem. By night on horseback he rides through the ruins. He overcomes the most ferocious opposition. He arouses the piety and patriotism of the people, and in less than two months, namely, in fifty-two days, Jerusalem was rebuilt. That's what I call busy and triumpant sadness.

My friends, the whole temptation is with you when you have trouble, to do just the opposite to the behavior of Nehemiah, and that is to give up. You say: "I have lost my child and can never smile again." You say, "I have lost my property, and I never can repair my fortunes." You say, "I have fallen into sin, and I never can start again for a new life." If Satan can make you form that resolution, and make you keep it, he has ruined you. Trouble is not sent to crush you, but to arouse you, to animate you, to propel you. The blacksmith does not thrust the iron into the forge, and then blow away with the bellows, and then bring the hot iron out on the anvil and beat with stroke after stroke to ruin the iron, but to prepare it for a better use. Oh that the Lord God of Nehemiah would rouse up all broken-hearted people to rebuild. Whipped, betrayed, shipwrecked, imprisoned, Paul went right on. The Italian martyr Algerius sits in his dungeon writing a letter, and he dates it "From the delectable orchard of the Leonine prison." That is what I call triumphant sadness. I knew a mother who buried her babe on Friday and on Sabbath appeared in the house of God and said: "Give me a class; give me a Sabbath-school class. I have no child now left me, and I would like to have a class of little children. Give me real poor children. Give me a class off the back street." That, I say, is beautiful. That is triumphant sadness. At three o'clock this afternoon, in a beautiful parlor in Philadelphia—a parlor pictured and statuetted—there will be from ten to twenty destitute children of the street. It has been so every Sabbath afternoon at three o'clock for sixteen years. These destitute children receive religious instruction, concluding with cakes and sandwiches. How do I know that that has been going on for sixteen years? I know it in this way. That was the first home in Philadelphia where I was called to comfort a great sorrow. They had a splendid boy, and he had been drowned at Long Branch. The father and mother almost idolized the boy, and the sob and shriek of that father and mother as they hung over the coffin resound in my ears to-day. There seemed to be no use of praying, for when I knelt down to pray, the outcry in the room drowned out all the prayer. But the Lord comforted that sorrow. They did not forget their trouble. If you should go this snowy afternoon into Laurel Hill, you would find a monument with the word "Walter" inscribed upon it, and a wreath of fresh flowers around the name. I think there has not been an hour in sixteen years, winter or summer, when there was not a wreath of fresh flowers around Walter's name. But the Christian mother who sends those flowers there, having no child left, Sabbath afternoons mothers ten or twenty of the lost ones of the street. That is beautiful That is what I call busy and triumphant sadness. Here is a man who has lost his property. He does not go to hard drinking. He does not destroy his own life. He comes and says, "Harness me for Christian work. My money's gone. I have no treasures on earth. I want treasures in heaven. I have a voice and a heart to serve God." You say that that man has failed. He has not failed—he has triumphed. Oh, I wish I could persuade all the people who have any kind of trouble never to give up. I wish they would look at the midnight rider of the text, and that the four hoofs of that beast on which Nehemiah rode might cut to pieces all your discouragements, and hardships, and trials. Give up! Who is going to give up, when on the bosom of God he can have all his troubles hushed? Give up! Never think of giving up. Are you borne down with poverty? A little child was found holding her dead mother's hand in the darkness of a tenement-house, and some one coming in, the little girl looked up, while holding her dead mother's hand, and said: "Oh, I do wish that God had made more light for poor folks." My dear, God will be your light, God will be your shelter, God will be your home. Are you borne down with the bereavements of life? Is the house lonely now that the child is gone? Do not give up. Think of what the old sexton said when the minister asked him why he put so much care on the little graves, in the cemetery—so much more care than on the larger graves, and the old sexton said "Sir, you know that 'of such is the kingdom of heaven,' and

I think the Savior is pleased when He sees so much white clover growing around these little graves." But when the minister pressed the old sexton for a more satisfactory answer, the old sexton said: "Sir, about these larger graves, I don't know who are the Lord's saints and who are not; but you know, sir, it is clean different with the bairns." Oh, if you have had that keen, tender, indescribable sorrow that comes from the loss of a child, do not give up. The old sexton was right. It is all well with the bairns. Or, if you have sinned, if you have sinned grievously—sinned until you have been cast out by the Church, sinned until you have been cast out by society, do not give up. Perhaps there may be in this house one that could truthfully utter the lamentation of another:

> "Once I was pure as the snow, but I fell—
> Fell like a snowflake, from heaven to hell—
> Fell, to be trampled as filth in the street—
> Fell, to be scoffed at, spit on, and beat;
> Praying, cursing, wishing to die.
> Selling my soul to whoever would buy,
> Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
> Hating the living, and fearing the dead."

Do not give up. One like unto the Son of God comes to you to-day, saying, "Go and sin no more;" while He cries out to your assailants, "Let him that is without sin cast the first stone at her." Oh! there is no reason why any one in this house, by reason of any trouble or sin, should give up. Are you a foreigner, and in a strange land? Nehemiah was an exile. Are you penniless? Nehemiah was poor. Are you homesick? Nehemiah was homesick. Are you broken-hearted? Nehemiah was broken-hearted. But just see him in the text, riding along the sacrileged grave of his father, and by the dragon well, and through the fish gate, and by the king's pool, in and out, in and out, the moonlight falling on the broken masonry, which throws a long shadow at which the horse shies, and at the same time that moonlight kindling up the features of this man till you see not only the mark of sad reminiscence, but the courage the hope, the enthusiasm of a man who knows that Jerusalem will be rebuilded. I pick you up to-day, out of your sins and out of your sorrow, and I put you against the warm heart of Christ. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."



I ONCE WAS PITCHED OUT OF THAT GROG SHOP.

CHAPTER XIX.

TRAPS FOR MEN.

"Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird."—Proverbs vi: 9.

Early in the morning I went out with a fowler to catch wild pigeons. We hastened through the mountain gorge and into the forest. We spread out the net, and covered up the edges of it as well as we could. We arranged the call-bird, its feet fast, and its wings flapping in invitation to all fowls of heaven to settle down there. We retired into a booth of branches and leaves and waited. After a while, looking out of the door of the booth, we saw a flock of birds in the sky. They came nearer and nearer, and after a while were about to swoop into the net, when suddenly they darted away. Again we waited. After awhile we saw another flock of birds. They came nearer and nearer until just at the moment when they were about to swoop they darted away. The fowler was very much disappointed as well as myself. We said to each other, "What is the matter?" and "Why were not these birds caught?" We went out and examined the net, and by a flutter of a branch of a tree part of the net had been conspicuously exposed, and the birds coming very near had seen their peril and darted away. When I saw that, I said to the old fowler, "That reminds me of a passage of Scripture: 'Surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird.'" Now the net in my text stands for temptation.

The call-bird of sin tempts men on from point to point and from branch to branch until they are about to drop into the net. If a man finds out in time that it is the temptation of the devil, or that evil men are attempting to capture his soul for time and for eternity, the man steps back. He says, "I am not to be caught in that way: I see what you are about: surely in vain is the net spread in the sight of any bird."

There are two classes of temptations—the superficial and the subterraneous—those above ground, those under ground. If a man could see sin as it is, he would no more embrace it than he would embrace a leper. Sin is a daughter of hell, yet she is garlanded and robed and trinketed. Her voice is a warble. Her cheek is the setting sun. Her forehead is an aurora. She says to men: "Come, walk this path with me; it is thymed and primrosed, and the air is bewitched with the odors of the hanging gardens of heaven; the rivers are rivers of wine, and all you have to do is to drink them up in chalices that sparkle with diamond and amethyst and crysoprasus. See! It is all bloom and roseate cloud and heaven." Oh! my friends, if for one moment the choiring of all these concerted voices of sin could be hushed, we should see the orchestra of the pit with hot breath blowing through fiery flute, and the skeleton arms on drums of thunder and darkness beating the chorus: "The end thereof is death."

I want this morning to point out the insidious temptations that are assailing more especially our young men. The only kind of nature comparatively free from temptation, so far as I can judge, is the cold, hard, stingy, mean temperament. What would Satan do with such a man if he got him? Satan is not anxious to get a man who, after a while, may dispute with him the realm of everlasting meanness. It is the generous young man, the ardent young man, the warm-hearted young man, the social young man, that is in especial peril. A pirate goes out on the sea, and one bright morning he puts the glass to his eye and looks off, and sees an empty vessel floating from port to port. He says: "Never mind; that's no prize for us." But the same morning he puts the glass to his eye, and he sees a vessel coming from Australia laden with gold, or a vessel from the Indies laden with spices. He says: "That's our prize; bear down on it!" Across that unfortunate ship the grappling-hooks are thrown. The crew are blindfolded and are compelled to walk the plank. It is not the empty vessel, but the laden merchantman that is the temptation to the pirate. And a young man empty of head, empty of heart, empty of life—you want no Young Men's Christian Association to keep him safe; he is safe. He will not gamble unless it is with somebody else's stakes. He will not break the Sabbath unless somebody else pays the horse hire. He will not drink unless some one else treats him. He will hang around the bar hour after hour, waiting for some generous young man to come in. The generous young man comes in and accosts him and says: "Well, will you have a drink with me to-day?" The man, as though it were a sudden thing for him, says: "Well, well, if you insist on it I will—I will."

Too mean to go to perdition unless somebody else pays his expenses! For such young men we will not fight. We would no more contend for them than Tartary and Ethiopia would fight as to who should have the great Sahara Desert; but for those young men who are buoyant and enthusiastic, those who are determined to do something for time and for eternity—for them we will fight, and we now declare everlasting war against all the influences that assail them, and we ask all good men and philanthropists to wheel into line, and all the armies of Heaven to bear down upon the foe, and we pray Almighty God that with the thunderbolts of his wrath he will strike down and consume all these influences that are attempting to destroy the young men for whom Christ died.

The first class of temptations that assaults a young man is led on by the skeptic. He will not admit he is an infidel or atheist. Oh, no! he is a "freethinker;" he is one of your "liberal" men; he is free and easy in religion. O! how liberal he is; he so "liberal" that he will give away his Bible; he is so "liberal" that he will give away the throne of eternal justice; he is so "liberal" that he would be willing to give God out of the universe; he is so "liberal" that he would give up his own soul and the souls of all his friends. Now, what more could you ask in the way of liberality? The victim of this skeptic has probably just come from the country. Through the intervention of friends he has been placed in a shop. On Saturday the skeptic says to him, "Well, what are you going to do to-morrow?" He says, "I am going to church." "Is it possible?" says the skeptic. "Well, I used to do those things; I was brought up, I suppose, as you were, in a religious family, and I believed all those things, but I got over it; the fact is, since I came to town I have read a great deal, and I have found that there are a great many things in the Bible that are ridiculous. Now, for instance, all that about the serpent being cursed to crawl in the garden of Eden because it had tempted our first parents; why you see how absurd it is; you can tell from the very organization of the serpent that it had to crawl; it crawled before it was cursed just as well as it crawled afterwards; you can tell from its organization that it crawled. Then all that story about the whale swallowing Jonah, or Jonah swallowing the whale, which was it? It don't make any difference, the thing is absurd; it is ridiculous to suppose that a man could have gone down through the jaws of a sea monster and yet kept his life; why, his respiration would have been hindered; he would have been digested; the gastric juice would have dissolved the fibrine and coagulated albumen, and Jonah would have been changed from prophet into chyle. Then all that story about the miraculous conception—why, it is perfectly disgraceful. O! sir, I believe in the light of nature. This is the nineteenth century. Progress, sir, progress. I don't blame you, but after you have been in town as long as I have, you will think just as I do."

Thousands of young men are going down under that process day by day, and there is only here and there a young man who can endure this artillery of scorn. They are giving up their Bibles. The light of nature! They have the light of nature in China; they have it in Hindostan; they have it in Ceylon. Flowers there, stars there, waters there, winds there; but no civilization, no homes, no happiness. Lancets to cut, and Juggernauts to fall under, and hooks to swing on; but no happiness. I tell you, my young brother, we have to take a religion of some kind. We have to choose between four or five. Shall it be the Koran of the Mohammedan, or the Shaster of the Hindoo, or the Zendavesta of the Persian, or the Confucius writings of the Chinese, or the Holy Scriptures? Take what you will; God helping me, I will take the Bible. Light for all darkness; rock for all foundation; balm for all wounds. A glory that lifts its pillars of fire over the wilderness march. Do not give up your Bibles. If these people scoff at you as though religion and the Bible were fit only for weak-minded people, you just tell them you are not ashamed to be in the company of Burke the statesman, and Raphael the painter, and Thorwaldsen the sculptor, and Mozart the musician, and Blackstone the lawyer, and Bacon the philosopher, and Harvey the physician, and John Milton the poet. Ask them what infidelity has ever done to lift the fourteen hundred millions of the race out of barbarism. Ask them when infidelity ever instituted a sanitary commission; and, before you leave their society once and for ever, tell them that they have insulted the memory of your Christian father, and spit upon the death-bed of your mother, and with swine's snout rooted up the grave of your sister who died believing in the Lord Jesus.

Young man, hold on to your Bible? It is the best book you ever owned. It will tell you how to dress, how to bargain, how to walk, how to act, how to live, how to die. Glorious Bible! whether on parchment or paper, in octavo or duodecimo, on the center table of the drawing-room or in the counting-room of the banker. Glorious Bible! Light to our feet and lamp to our path. Hold on to it!

The second class of insidious temptations that comes upon our young men is led on by the dishonest employer. Every commercial establishment is a school. In nine cases out of ten, the principles of the employer become the principles of the employe. I ask the older merchants to bear me out in these statements. If, when you were just starting in life, in commercial life, you were told that honesty was not marketable, that though you might sell all the goods in the shop, you must not sell your conscience, that while you were to exercise all industry and tact, you were not to sell your conscience—

if you were taught that gains gotten by sin were combustible, and at the moment of ignition would be blown on by the breath of God until all the splendid estate would vanish into white ashes scattered in the whirlwind—then that instruction has been to you a precaution and a help ever since. There are hundreds of commercial establishments in our great cities which are educating a class of young men who will be the honor of the land, and there are other estabilshments which are educating young men to be nothing but sharpers. What chance is there for a young man who was taught in an establishment that it is right to lie, if it is smart, and that a French label is all that is necessary to make a thing French, and that you ought always to be honest when it pays, and that it is wrong to steal unless you do it well? Suppose, now, a young man just starting in life enters a place of that kind where there are ten young men, all drilled in the infamous practices of the establishment. He is ready to be taught. The young man has no theory of commercial ethics. Where is he to get his theory? He will get the theory from his employers. One day he pushes his wit a little beyond what the establishment demands of him, and he fleeces a customer until the clerk is on the verge of being seized by the law. What is done in the establishment? He is not arraigned. The head man of the establishment says to him: "Now, be careful; be careful, young man, you might be caught; but really that was splendidly done; you will get along in the world, I warrant you." Then that young man goes up until he becomes head clerk. He has found there is a premium on iniquity.

One morning the employer comes to the establishment. He goes into his counting-room and throws up his hands and shouts: "Why, the safe has been robbed!" What is the matter? Nothing, nothing; only the clerk who had been practicing a good while on customers is practicing a little on the employer. No new principle introduced into that establishment. It is a poor rule that will not work both ways. You must never steal unless you can do it well. He did it well. I am not talking an abstraction; I am talking a terrible and a crushing fact.

Now here is a young man. Look at him to-day. Look at him five years from now, after he has been under trial in such an establishment. Here he stands in the shop to-day, his cheeks ruddy with the breath of the hills. He unrolls the goods on the counter in gentlemanly style. He commends them to the purchaser. He points out all the good points in the fabric. He effects the sale. The goods are wrapped up, and he dismisses the customer with a cheerful "good morning," and the country merchant departs so impressed with the straightforwardness of that young man that he will come again and again, every spring and every autumn unless interfered with. The young man has been now in that establishment five years. He unrolls the goods on the counter. He says to the customer, "Now those are the best goods we have in our establishment;" they have better on the next shelf. He says: "We are selling these goods less than cost;" they are making twenty per cent. He says: "There is nothing like them in all the city;" there are fifty shops that want to sell the same thing. He says: "Now, that is a durable article, it will wash;" yes, it will wash out. The sale is made, the goods are wrapped up, the country merchant goes off feeling that he has an equivalent for his money, and the sharp clerk goes into the private room of the counting-house, and he says: "Well, I got rid of those goods at last; I really thought we never would sell them; I told him we were selling them less than cost, and he thought he was getting a good bargain; got rid of them at last." And the head of the firm says: "That's well done, splendidly done; let's go over to Delmonico's." Meanwhile, God had recorded eight lies—four lies against the young man, four lies against his employer, for I undertake to say that the employer is responsible for all the iniquities of his clerks, and all the iniquities of those who are clerks of these clerks, down to the tenth generation, if those employers inculcated iniquitous and damning principles. I stand before young men this morning who are under this pressure. I say, come out of it. "Oh!" you say, "I can't; I have my widowed mother to support, and if a man loses a situation now he can't get another one." I say, come out of it. Go home to your mother and say to her, "Mother, I can't stay in that shop and be upright; what shall I do?" and if she is worthy of you she will say, "Come out of it, my son—we will just throw ourselves on him who hath promised to be the God of the widow and the fatherless; he will take care of us." And I tell you no young man ever permanently suffered by such a course of conduct. In Philadelphia, in a drug shop, a young man said to his employer: "I want to please you, really, and I am willing to sell medicines on Sunday; but I can't sell this patent shoe-blacking on Sunday." "Well," said the head man, "you will have to do it, or else you will have to go away." The young man said: "I can't do it; I am willing to sell medicines, but not shoe-blacking." "Well, then, go! Go now." The young man went away. The Lord looked after him. The hundreds of thousands of dollars he won in this world were the smallest part of his fortune. God honored him. By the course he took he saved his soul as well as his fortunes in the future. A man said to his employer: "I can't wash the wagon on Sunday morning; I am willing to wash it on Saturday afternoon; but, sir, you will please excuse me, I can't wash the wagon on Sunday morning." His employer said: "You must wash it; my carriage comes in every Saturday night, and you have got to wash it on Sunday morning." "I can't do it," the man said. They parted. The Lord looked after him, grandly looked after him. He is worth to-day a hundred-fold more than his employer ever was or ever will be, and he saved his soul. Young man, it is safe to do right. There are young men in this house to-day who, under this storm of temptation, are striking deeper and deeper their roots, and spreading out broader their branches. They are Daniels in Babylon, they are Josephs in the Egyptian court, they are Pauls amid the wild beasts at Ephesus. I preach to encourage them. Lay hold of God and be faithful.

There is a mistake we make about young men. We put them in two classes: the one class is moral, the other is dissolute. The moral are safe. The dissolute cannot be reclaimed. I deny both propositions. The moral are not safe unless they have laid hold of God, and the dissolute may be reclaimed. I suppose there are self-righteous men in this house who feel no need of God, and will not seek after him, and they will go out in the world and they will be tempted, and they will be flung down by misfortune, and they will go down, down, down, until some night you will see them going home hooting, raving, shouting blasphemy—going home to their mother, going home to their sister, going home to the young companion to whom, only a little while ago, in the presence of a brilliant assemblage, flashing lights and orange blossoms, and censers swinging in the air, they promised fidelity and purity, and kindness perpetual. As that man reaches the door, she will open it, not with an outcry, but she will stagger back from the door as he comes in, and in her look there will be the prophecy of woes that are coming: want that will shiver in need of a fire, hunger that will cry in vain for bread, cruelties that will not leave the heart when they have crushed it, but pinch it again, and stab it again, until some night she will open the door of the place where her companion was ruined, and she will fling out her arm from under her ragged shawl and say, with almost omnipotent eloquence, "Give me back my husband! Give me back my protector! Give me back my all! Him of the kind heart and gentle words, and the manly brow—give him back to me!" And then the wretches, obese and filthy, will push back their matted locks, and they will say, "Put her out! Put her out!" Oh! self-righteous man, without God you are in peril. Seek after him to-day. Amid the ten thousand temptations of life there is no safety for a man without God.

But I may be addressing some who have gone astray, and so I assault that other proposition that the dissolute cannot be reclaimed. Perhaps you have only gone a little astray. While I speak are you troubled? Is there a voice within you saying, "What did you do that for? Why did you go there? What did you mean by that?" Is there a memory in your soul that makes you tremble this morning? God only knows all our hearts. Yea, if you have gone so far as to commit iniquities, and have gone through the whole catalogue, I invite you back this morning. The Lord waits for you. "Rejoice! O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment."

Come home, young man, to your father's God. Come home, young man, to your mother's God. O! I wish that all the batteries of the Gospel could to-day be unlimbered against all those influences which are taking down so many of our young men. I would like to blow a trumpet of warning, and recruit until this whole audience would march out on a crusade against the evils of society. But let none of us be disheartened. O! Christian workers, my heart is high with hope. The dark horizon is blooming into the morning of which prophets spoke, and of which poets have dreamed, and of which painters have sketched. The world's bridal hour advances. The mountains will kiss the morning radiant and effulgent, and all the waves of the sea will become the crystal keys of a great organ, on which the fingers of everlasting joy shall play the grand march of a world redeemed. Instead of the thorn there shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the briar there shall come up the myrtle tree, and the mountains and the hills shall break forth into singing, and all the trees of the wood shall clap their hands!

CHAPTER XX.

STRANGERS WARNED.

"And Solomon numbered all the strangers that were in the land of Israel."—2 Chron. ii: 17.

If, in the time when people traveled afoot or on camel-back, and vacillation from city to city was seldom, it was important that Solomon recognize the presence of strangers, how much more important, now in these days, when by railroad and steamboat the population of the earth are always in motion, and from one year's end to the other, our cities are crowded with visitors. Every morning, on the Hudson River railroad track, there come in, I think, about six trains, and on the New Jersey railroad track some thirteen passenger trains; so that all the depots and the wharves are a-rumble and a-clang with the coming in of a great immigration of strangers. Some of them come for purposes of barter, some for mechanism, some for artistic gratification, some for sight-seeing. A great many of them go out on the evening trains, and consequently the city makes but little impression upon them; but there are multitudes who, in the hotels and boarding-houses, make temporary residence. They tarry here for three or four days, or as many weeks. They spend the days in the stores and the evenings in sight-seeing. Their temporary stay will make or break them, not only financially but morally, for this world and the world that is to come. Multitudes of them come into our morning and evening services. I am conscious that I stand in the presence of many of them now. I desire more especially to speak to them. May God give me the right word and help me to utter it in the right way.

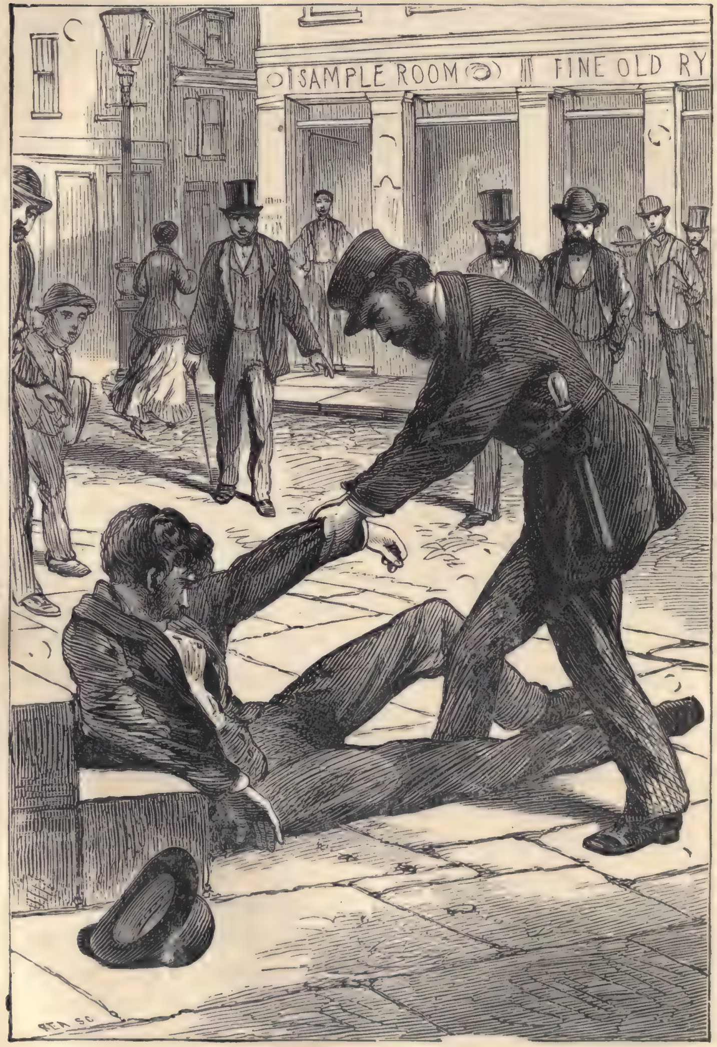
There have glided into this house those unknown to others, whose history, if told, would be more thrilling than the deepest tragedy, more exciting than Nilsson's song, more bright than a spring morning, more awful than a wintry midnight. If they could stand up here and tell the story of their escapes, and their temptations, and their bereavements, and their disasters, and their victories, and their defeats, there would be in this house such a commingling of groans and acclamations as would make the place unendurable.

There is a man who, in infancy, lay in a cradle satin-lined. There is a man who was picked up, a foundling, on Boston Common. Here is a man who is coolly observing this day's service, expecting no advantage, and caring for no advantage for himself; while yonder is a man who has been for ten years in an awful conflagration of evil habits, and he is a mere cinder of a destroyed nature, and he is wondering if there shall be in this service any escape or help for his immortal soul. Meeting you only once, perhaps, face to face, I strike hands with you in an earnest talk about your present condition, and your eternal well-being. St. Paul's ship at Melita went to pieces where two seas meet; but we stand to-day at a point where a thousand seas converge, and eternity alone can tell the issue of the hour.

The hotels of this country, for beauty and elegance are not surpassed by the hotels in any other land; but those that are most celebrated for brilliancy of tapestry and mirror cannot give to the guest any costly apartment, unless he can afford a parlor in addition to his lodging. The stranger, therefore, will generally find as-signed to him a room without any pictures, and perhaps any rocking chair! He will find a box of matches on a bureau ,and an old newspaper left by the previous occupant, and that will be about all the ornamentation. At seven o'clock in the evening, after having taken his repast, he will look over his memorandum-book of the day's work ; he will write a letter to his home, and then a desperation will seize upon him to get out. You hear the great city thundering under your windows, and you say: "I must join that procession," and in ten minutes you have joined it. Where are you going? "Oh," you say, "I haven't made up my mind yet." Better make up your mind before you start. Perhaps the very way you go now you will always go. Twenty years ago there were young men who came down the Astor House steps, and started out in a wrong direction, where they have been going ever since.

"Well, where are you going?" says one man. "I am going to the Academy to hear some music." Good. I would like to join you at the door. At the tap of the orchestral baton, all the gates of harmony and beauty will open before your soul. I congratulate you. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going up to see some advertised pictures." Good. I should like to go along with you and look over the same catalogue, and study with you Kensett, and Bierstadt, and Church, and Moran. Nothing more elevating than good pictures. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going up to the Young Men's Christian Association rooms." Good. You will find there gymnastics to strengthen the muscles, and books to improve the mind, and Christian influence to save the soul. I wish every city in the United States had as fine a palace for its Young Men's Christian Association as New York has. Where are *you* going? "Well," you say, "I am going to take a long walk up Broadway, and so turn around into the Bowery. I am going to study human life." Good. A walk through Broadway at eight o'clock at night is interesting, educating, fascinating, appalling, exhilarating to the last degree. Stop in front of that theater, and see who goes in. Stop at that saloon, and see who comes out. See the great tides of life surging backward and forward, and beating against the marble of the curbstone, and eddying down into the saloons. What is that mark on the face of that debauchee? It is the hectic flush of eternal death. What is that Woman's laughter? It is the shriek of a lost soul. Who is that Christian man going along with a phial of anodyne to the dying pauper on Elm street? Who is that belated man on the way to a prayer-meeting? Who is that city missionary going to take a box in which to bury a child? Who are all these clusters of bright and beautiful faces? They are going to some interesting place of amusement. Who is that man going into the drug-store? That is the man who yesterday lost all his fortune on Wall street. He is going in for a dose of belladonna, and before morning it will make no difference to him whether stocks are up or down. I tell you that Broadway, between seven and twelve o'clock at night, between the Battery and Union-square, is an Austerlitz, a Gettysburg, a Waterloo, where kingdoms are lost or won, and three worlds mingle in the strife.

I meet another coming down off the hotel steps, and I say: "Where are you going?" You say: "I am going with a merchant of New York who has promised to-night to show me the underground life of the city. I am his customer, and he is going to oblige me very much." Stop! A business house that tries to get or



ONLY A DRUNKARD FALLEN,

keep your custom through such a process as that, is not worthy of you. There are business establishments in our cities which have for years been sending to eternal destruction hundreds and thousands of merchants. They have a secret drawer in the counter, where money is kept, and the clerk goes and gets it when he wants to take these visitors to the city through the low slums of the place. Shall I mention the names of some of these great commercial establishments? I have them on my lip. Shall I? Perhaps I had better leave it to the young men who, in that process, have been destroyed themselves while they have been destroying others. I care not how high-sounding the name of a commercial establishment, if it proposes to get customers or to keep them by such a process as that; drop their acquaintance. They will cheat you before you get through. They will send to you a style of goods different from that which you bought by sample. They will give you under-weight. There will be in the package half-a-dozen less pairs of suspenders than you paid for. They will rob you. Oh, you feel in your pockets and say: "Is my money gone?" They have robbed you of something for which pounds and shillings can never give you compensation. When one of these Western merchants has been dragged by one of these commercial agents through the slums of the city, he is not fit to go home. The mere memory of what he has seen will be moral pollution, unless he go on positive Christian errand. I think you had better let the city missionary and the police and the Christian reformer attend to the exploration of New York and underground life. You do not go to a small-pox hospital for the purpose of exploration. You do not go there, because you are afraid of the contagion. And yet, you go into the presence of a moral leprosy that is as much more dangerous to you as the death of the soul is worse than the death of the body. I will undertake to say that nine-tenths of the men who have been ruined in our cities have been ruined by simply going to observe without any idea of participating. The fact is that underground city life is a filthy, fuming, reeking, pestiferous depth which may blast the eye that looks at it. In the Reign of Terror, in 1792, in Paris, people, escaping from the officers of the law, got into the sewers of the city, and crawled and walked through miles of that awful labyrinth, stifled with the atmosphere and almost dead, some of them, when they came out to the river Seine, where they washed themselves and again breathed the fresh air. But I have to tell you that a great many of the men who go on the work of exploration through the underground gutters of New York life never come out at any Seine river where they can wash off the pollution of the moral sewerage. Stranger, if one of the "drummers" of the city, as they are called—if one of the "drummers" propose to take you and show you the "sights" of the town and underground New York, say to him: "Please, sir, what part do you propose to show me?"

Sabbath morning comes. You wake up in the hotel. You have had a longer sleep than usual. You say: "Where am I? a thousand miles from home! I have no family to take to church to-day. My pastor will not expect my presence. I think I shall look over my accounts and study my memorandum-book. Then I will write a few business letters, and talk to that merchant who came in on the same train with me." Stop! you cannot afford to do it.

"But," you say, "I am worth five hundred thousand dollars." You cannot afford to do it. You say: "I am worth a million dollars." You cannot afford to do it. All you gain by breaking the Sabbath you will lose. You will lose one of three things: your intellect, your morals, or your property, and you cannot point in the whole earth to a single exception to this rule. God gives us six days and keeps one for himself. Now if we try to get the seventh, he will upset the work of all the other six.

I remember going up Mount Washington, before the railroad had been built, to the Tip-Top House, and the guide would come around to our horses and stop us when we were crossing a very steep and dangerous place, and he would tighten the girdle of the horse, and straighten the saddle. And I have to tell you that this road of life is so steep and full of peril we must, at least one day in seven, stop and have the harness of life readjusted, and our souls re-equipped. The seven days of the week are like seven business partners, and you must give to each one his share, or the business will be broken up. God is so generous with us; he has given you six days to his one. Now, here is a father who has seven apples, and he gives six to his greedy boy, proposing to keep one for himself. The greedy boy grabs for the other one and loses all the six.

How few men there are who know how to keep the Lord's day away from home. A great many who are consistent on the banks of the St. Lawrence, or the Alabama, or the Mississippi, are not consistent when they get so far off as the East River. I repeat—though it is putting it on a low ground—you cannot financially afford to break the Lord's day. It is only another way of tearing up your government securities, and putting down the price of goods, and blowing up your store. I have friends who are all the time slicing off pieces of the Sabbath. They cut a little of the Sabbath off that end, and a little of the Sabbath off this end. They do not keep the twenty-four hours.

The Bible says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy." I have good friends who are quite accustomed to leaving Albany by the midnight train on Saturday night, and getting home before church. Now, there may be occasions when it is right, but generally it is wrong. How if the train should run off the track into the North River? I hope your friends will not send for me to preach your funeral sermon. It would be an awkward thing for me to stand up by your side and preach—you a Christian man killed on a rail-train traveling on a Sunday morning. "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." What does that mean? It means twenty-four hours. A man owes you a dollar. You don't want him to pay you ninety cents; you want the dollar. If God demands of us twenty-four hours out of the week, he means twenty-four hours and not nineteen. Oh, we want to keep vigilantly in this country the American Sabbath, and not have transplanted here the German or the French Sabbath. If any of you have been in Paris you know that on Sabbath morning the vast population rush out toward the country with baskets and bundles, and toward night, they come back fagged out, cross, and intoxicated. May God preserve to us our glorious, quiet American Sabbaths.

And so men come to the verge of city life and say: "Now we'll look off. Come, young man, don't be afraid. Come near, let's look off." He looks and looks, until, after a while, Satan comes and puts a hand on each of his shoulders and pushes him off. Society says it is evil proclivity on the part of that young man. Oh, no, he was simply an exploror, and sacrificed his life in discovery. A young man comes in from the country bragging that nothing can do him any harm. He knows about all the tricks of city life. "Why," he says, "didn't

I receive a circular in the country telling me that somehow they found out I was a sharp business man, and if I would only send a certain amount of money by mail or express, charges prepaid, they would send a package with which I could make a fortune in two months; but I didn't believe it. My neighbors did, but I didn't. Why, no man could take my money. I carry it in a pocket inside my vest. No man could take it. No man could cheat me at the faro table. Don't I know all about the 'cue-box,' and the 'dealer's-box,' and the cards stuck together as though they were one, and when to hand in my cheques? Oh, they can't cheat me. I know what I am about." While, at the same time, that very moment, such men are succumbing to the worst Satanic influences, in the simple fact that they are going to observe. Now, if a man or woman shall go down into a haunt of iniquity for the purpose of reforming men and women—if, as did John Howard, or Elizabeth Fry, or Van Meter, they go down among the abandoned for the sake of saving souls—or as did Chalmers and Guthrie to see sin, that they might better combat it, then they shall be God-protected, and they will come out better than when they went in. But if you go on this work of exploration merely for the purpose of satisfying a morbid curiosity, I will take twenty per cent. off your moral character. O strangers, welcome to the great city. May you find Christ here, and not any physical or moral damage. Men coming from inland, from distant cities, have here found God and found him in our service. May that be your case now. You thought you were brought to this place merely for the purpose of sight-seeing. Perhaps God brought you to this roaring city for the purpose of working out your eternal salvation. Go back to your homes and tell them how you met Christ here—the loving, patient, pardoning, and sympathetic Christ. Who knows but the city which has been the destruction of so many may be your eternal redemption?

A good many years ago, Edward Stanley, the English commander, with his regiment, took a fort. The fort was manned by some three hundred Spaniards. Edward Stanley came close up to the fort, leading his men, when a Spaniard thrust at him with a spear, intending to destroy his life; but Stanley caught hold of the spear, and the Spaniard in attempting to jerk the spear away from Stanley, lifted him up into the battlements. No sooner had Stanley taken his position on the battlements, than he swung his sword and his whole regiment leaped up after him and the fort was taken. So may it be with you, O stranger. The city influences which have destroyed so many and dashed them down for ever, shall be the means of lifting you up into the tower of God's mercy and strength, your soul more than conqueror through the grace of Him who hath promised an especial benediction to those who shall treat you well, saying: "I was a stranger and ye took me in."

CHAPTER XXI.

PEOPLE TO BE FEARED.

"Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it."—Psalms lxxx: 12, 13.

By this homely but expressive figure, the text sets forth the bad influences which in olden time broke in upon God's heritage, as with swine's foot trampling, and as with swine's snout uprooting the vineyards of prosperity. What was true then is true now. There have been enough trees of righteousness planted to overshadow the whole earth, had it not been for the axe-men who hewed them down. The temple of truth would long ago have been completed, had it not been for the iconoclasts who defaced the walls and battered down the pillars. The whole earth would have been an Eshcol of ripened clusters, had it not been that "the boar has wasted it and the wild beast of the field devoured it."

I propose to point out to you those whom I consider to be *the uprooting and devouring classes of society.* First, *the public criminals.* You ought not to be surprised that these people make up a large portion in many communities. The vast majority of the criminals who take ship from Europe come into our own port. In 1869, of the forty-nine thousand people who were incarcerated in the prisons of the country, thirty-two thousand were of foreign birth. Many of them were the very desperadoes of society, oozing into the slums of our cities, waiting for an opportunity to riot and steal and debauch, joining the large gang of American thugs and cut-throats. There are in this cluster of cities—New York, Jersey City, and Brooklyn—four thousand people whose entire business in life is to commit crime. That is as much their business as jurisprudence or medicine or merchandise is your business. To it they bring all their energies of body, mind, and soul, and they look upon the interregnums which they spend in prison as so much unfortunate loss of time, just as you look upon an attack of influenza or rheumatism which fastens you in the house for a few days. It is their lifetime business to pick pockets, and blow up safes, and shoplift, and ply the panel game, and they have as much pride of skill in their business as you have in yours when you upset the argument of an opposing council, or cure a gunshot fracture which other surgeons have given up, or foresee a turn in the market so you buy goods just before they go up twenty per cent. It is their business to commit crime, and I do not suppose that once in a year the thought of the immorality strikes them. Added to these professional criminals, American and foreign, there is a large class of men who are more or less industrious in crime. In one year the police in this cluster of cities arrested ten thousand people for theft, and ten thousand for assault and battery, and fifty thousand for intoxication. Drunkenness is responsible for much of the theft, since it confuses a man's ideas of property, and he gets his hands on things that do not belong to him. Rum is responsible for much of the assault and battery, inspiring men to sudden bravery, which they must demonstrate though it be on the face of the next gentleman.

Seven million dollars' worth of property stolen in this cluster of cities in one year. You cannot, as good citizens, be independent of that fact. It will touch your pocket, since I have to give you the fact that these three cities pay seven million dollars' worth of taxes a year to arraign, try, and support the criminal population. You help to pay the board of every criminal, from the sneak-thief that snatches a spool of cotton, up to some man who enacts a "Black Friday." More than that, it touches your heart in the moral depression of the community. You might as well think to stand in a closely confined room where there are fifty people and yet not breathe the vitiated air, as to stand in a community where there is such a great multitude of the depraved without somewhat being contaminated. What is the fire that burns your store down compared with the conflagration which consumes your morals? What is the theft of the gold and silver from your money safe compared with the theft of your children's virtue?

We are all ready to arraign criminals. We shout at the top of our voice, "Stop thief!" and when the police get on the track we come out, hatless and in our slippers, and assist in the arrest. We come around the bawling ruffian and hustle him off to justice, and when he gets in prison, what do we do for him? With great gusto we put on the handcuffs and the hopples; but what preparation are we making for the day when the handcuffs and the hopples come off? Society seems to say to these criminals, "Villain, go in there and rot," when it ought to say, "You are an offender against the law, but we mean to give you an opportunity to repent; we mean to help you. Here are Bibles and tracts and Christian influences. Christ died for you. Look, and live."

Vast improvements have been made by introducing industries into the prison; but we want something more than hammers and shoe lasts to reclaim these people.

Aye, we want more than sermons on the Sabbath day, Society must impress these men with the fact that it does not enjoy their suffering, and that it is attempting to reform and elevate them. The majority of criminals suppose that society has a grudge against them, and they in turn have a grudge against society.

They are harder in heart and more infuriate when they come out of jail than when they went in. Many of the people who go to prison go again and again and again. Some years ago, of fifteen hundred prisoners who during the year had been in Sing Sing, four hundred had been there before. In a house of correction in the country, where during a certain reach of time there had been five thousand people, more than three thousand had been there before. So, in one case the prison, and in the other case the house of correction, left them just as bad as they were before. The secretary of one of the benevolent societies of New York saw a lad fifteen years of age who had spent three years of his life in prison, and he said to the lad, " What have they done for you to make you better?" " Well," replied the lad, " the first time I was brought up before the judge he said, ' You ought to be ashamed of yourself.' And then I committed a crime again, and I was brought up before the same judge, and he said, ' You rascal!' And after a while I committed some other crime, and I was brought before the same judge, and he said, ' You ought to be hanged.' " That is all they had done for him in the way of reformation and salvation. "Oh," you say, " these people are incorrigible." I suppose there are hundreds of persons this day lying in the prison bunks who would leap up at the prospect of reformation, if society would only allow them a way into decency and respectability. "Oh," you say, " I have no patience with these rogues." I ask you in reply, How much better would you have been under the same circumstances? Suppose your mother had been a blasphemer and your father a sot, and you had started life with a body stuffed with evil proclivities, and you had spent much of your time in a cellar amid obscenities and cursing, and if at ten years of age you had been compelled to go out and steal, battered and banged at night if you came in without any spoils, and suppose your early manhood and womanhood had been covered with rags and filth, and decent society had turned its back upon you, and left you to consort with vagabonds and wharf-rats—how much better would you have been? I have no sympathy with that executive clemency which would let crime run loose, or which would sit in the gallery of a court-room weeping because some hard-hearted wretch is brought to justice; but I do say that the safety and life of the community demand more potential influences in behalf of public offenders.

Within five minutes' walk of where I now stand, there is a prison, enough to bring down the wrath of Almighty God on this city of Brooklyn. It is the Raymond Street Jail. It would not be strange if the jail fever should start in that horrible hole, like that which raged in England during the session of the Black Assize, when three hundred perished—judges, jurors, constables, and lawyers. Alas, that our fair city should have such a pest-house. I understand the sheriff and the jail-keeper do all they can, under the circumstances, for the comfort of these people; but five and six people are crowded into a place where there ought to be but one or two. The air is like that of the Black Hole of Calcutta. As the air swept through the wicket, it almost knocked me down. No sunlight. Young men who had committed their first crime crowded in among old offenders. I saw there one woman, with a child almost blind, who had been arrested for the crime of poverty, who was waiting until the slow law could take her to the almshouse, where she rightfully belonged; but she was thrust in there with her child amid the most abandoned wretches of the town. Many of the offenders in that prison sleeping on the floor, with nothing but a vermin-covered blanket over them. Those people crowded and wan and wasted and half suffocated and infuriated. I said to the men, "How do you stand it here?" "God knows," said one man, "we have to stand it." Oh, they will pay you when they get out. Where they burned down one house they will burn three. They will strike deeper the assassin's knife. They are this minute plotting worse burglaries. Raymond Street Jail is the best place I know of to manufacture foot-pads, vagabonds, and cut-throats. Yale College is not so well calculated to make scholars, nor Harvard so well calculated to make scientists, nor Princeton so well calculated to make theologians, as Raymond Street Jail is calculated to make criminals. All that those men do not know of crime after they have been in that dungeon for some time, Satanic machination cannot teach them. Every hour that jail stands, it challenges the Lord Almighty to smite this city. I call upon the people to rise in their wrath and demand a reformation. I call upon the judges of our courts to expose that infamy. I call upon the Legislature of the State of New York, now in session, to examine and appease that outrage on God and human society. I demand, in behalf of those incarcerated prisoners, fresh air and clear sunlight, and, in the name of him who had not where to lay his head, a couch to rest on at night. In the insufferable stench and sickening surroundings of that Raymond Street Jail there is nothing but disease for the body, idiocy for the mind, and death for the soul. Stifled air and darkness and vermin never turned a thief into an honest man.

We want men like John Howard and Sir William Blackstone, and women like Elizabeth Fry, to do for the prisons of the United States what those people did in other days for the prisons of England. I thank God for what Isaac T. Hopper and Dr. Wines and Mr. Harris and scores of others have done in the way of prison reform; but we want something more radical before upon this city will come the blessing of him who said: "I was in prison, and ye came unto me."

Again, in this class of uprooting and devouring population are *untrustworthy officials.* "Woe unto thee, O land, when thy kings and child, and thy princes drink in the morning." It is a great calamity to a city when bad men get into public authority. Why was it that in New York there was such unparalleled crime between 1866 and 1871? It was because the judges of police in that city, for the most part, were as corrupt as the vagabonds that came before them for trial. Those were the days of high carnival for election frauds, assassination and forgery. We had the "Whisky Ring," and the "Tammany Ring," and the "Erie Ring." There was one man during those years that got one hundred and twenty-eight thousand dollars in one year for serving the public. In a few years it was estimated that there were fifty millions of public treasure squandered. In those times the criminal had only to wink to the judge, or his lawyer would wink for him, and the question was decided for the defendant. Of the eight thousand people arrested in that city in one year, only three thousand were punished. These little matters were "fixed up," while the interests of society were "fixed down." You know as well as I that a criminal who escapes only opens the door for other criminalities. When the two pickpockets snatched the diamond pin from the Brooklyn gentleman in a Broadway stage, and the villains were arrested, and the trial was set down for the General Sessions, and then the trial never came, and never anything more was heard of the case, the public officials were only bidding higher for more crime. It is no compliment to public authority when we have in all the cities of the country, walking abroad, men and women notorious for criminality, unwhipped of justice. They are pointed out to you in the street day by day. There you find what are called the "fences," the men who stand between the thief and the honest man, sheltering the thief and at a great price handing over the goods to the owner to whom they belong. There you will find those who are called the "skinners," the men who hover around Wall street, with great sleight of hand in bonds and stocks. There you find the funeral thieves, the people who go and sit down and mourn with families and pick their pockets. And there you find the "confidence men," who borrow money of you because they have a dead child in the house and want to bury it, when they never had a house nor a family; or they want to go to England and get a large property there, and they want you to pay their way, and they will send the money back by the very next mail. There are the "harbor thieves," the "shoplifters," the "pickpockets," famous all over the cities. Hundreds of them with their faces in the "Rogues' Gallery," yet doing nothing for the last five or ten years but defraud society and escape justice. When these people go unarrested and unpunished, it is putting a high premium upon vice, and saying to the young criminals of this country, "What a safe thing it is to be a great criminal." Let the law swoop upon them. Let it be known in this country that crime will have no quarter, that the detectives are after it, that the police club is being brandished, that the iron door of the prison is being opened, that the judge is ready to call on the case. Too great leniency to criminals is too great severity to society. When the President pardoned the wholesale dealer in obscene books he hindered the crusade against licentiousness; but when Governor Dix refused to let go Foster, the assassin, who was condemned to the gallows, he grandly vindicated the laws of God and the dignity of the State of New York.

Again: among the uprooting and devouring classes in our midst are *the idle*. Of course, I do not refer to people who are getting old, or to the sick, or to those who cannot get work; but I tell you to look out for those athletic men and women who will not work. When the French nobleman was asked why he kept busy when he had so large a property, he said, "I keep on engraving so I may not hang myself." I do not care who the man is, you cannot afford to be idle. It is from the idle classes that the criminal classes are made up. Character, like water, gets putrid if it stands still too long. Who can wonder that in this world, where there is so much to do, and all the hosts of earth and heaven and hell are plunging into the conflict, and angels are flying, and God is at work, and the universe is a-quake with the marching and counter-marching, that God lets his indignation fall upon a man who chooses idleness? I have watched these do-nothings who spend their time stroking their beard, and retouching their *toilette*, and criticising industrious people, and pass their days and nights in barrooms and club houses, lounging and smoking and chewing and card-playing. They are not only useless, but they are dangerous. How hard it is for them to while away the hours?

Alas! for them. If they do not know how to while away an hour, what will they do when they have all eternity on their hands? These men for a while smoke the best cigars, and wear the best broadcloth, and move in the highest spheres; but I have noticed that very soon they come down to the prison, the almshouse, or stop at the gallows.

The police stations of this cluster of cities furnish annually two hundred thousand lodgings. For the most part, these two hundred thousand lodgings are furnished to able-bodied men and women—people as able to work as you and I are. When they are received no longer at one police station, because they are "repeaters," they go to some other station, and so they keep moving around. They get their food at house doors, stealing what they can lay their hands on in the front basement while the servant is spreading the bread in the back basement. They will not work. Time and again, in the country districts, they have wanted hundreds and thousands of laborers. These men will not go. They do not want to work. I have tried them. I have set them to sawing wood in my cellar, to see whether they wanted to work. I offered to pay them well for it. I have heard the saw going for about three minutes, and then I went down, and lo, the wood, but no saw! They are the pest of society, and they stand in the way of the Lord's poor, who ought to be helped, and must be helped, and will be helped. While there are thousands of industrious men who cannot get any work, these men who do not want any work come in and make that plea. I am in favor of the restoration of the old-fashioned whipping-post for just this one class of men who will not work; sleeping at night at public expense in the station house; during the day, getting their food at your door-step. Imprisonment does not scare them. They would like it. Blackwell's Island or Sing Sing would be a comfortable home for them. They would have no objection to the almshouse, for they like thin soup, if they cannot get mock-turtle. I propose this for them: on one side of them put some healthy work; on the other side put a raw-hide, and let them take their choice. I like for that class of people the scant bill of fare that Paul wrote out for the Thessalonian loafers: "If any work not, neither should he eat." By what law of God or man is it right that you and I should toil day in and day out, until our hands are blistered and our arms ache and our brain gets numb, and then be called upon to support, what in the United States are about two million loafers! They are a very dangerous class. Let the public authorities keep their eyes on them.

Again: among the uprooting classes I place *the oppressed poor*. Poverty to a certain extent is chastening; but after that, when it drives a man to the wall, and he hears his children cry in vain for bread, it sometimes makes him desperate. I think that there are thousands of honest men lacerated into vagabondism. There are men crushed under burdens for which they are not half paid. While there is no excuse for criminality, even in oppression, I state it as a simple fact, that much of the scoundrelism of the community is consequent upon ill-treatment. There are many men and women battered and bruised and stung until the hour of despair has come, and they stand with the ferocity of a wild beast which, pursued until it can run no longer, turns round, foaming and bleeding, to fight the hounds.

There is a vast underground New York and Brooklyn life that is appalling and shameful. It wallows and steams with putrefaction. You go down the stairs, which are wet and decayed with filth, and at the bottom you find the poor victims on the floor, cold, sick, three-fourths dead, slinking into a still darker corner under the gleam of the lantern of the police. There has not been a breath of fresh air in that room for five years, literally. The broken sewer empties its contents upon them, and they lie at night in the swimming filth. There they are, men, women, children; blacks, whites; Mary Magdalen without her repentance, and Lazarus without his God: These are "the dives" into which the pick-pockets and the thieves go, as well as a great many who would like a different life but cannot get it. These places are the sores of the city, which bleed perpetual corruption. They are the underlying volcano that threatens us with a Caraccas earthquake. It rolls and roars and surges and heaves and rocks and blasphemes and dies. And there are only two outlets for it: the police court and the Potter's Field. In other words, they must either go to prison or to hell. Oh, you never saw it, you say. You never will see it until on the day when those staggering wretches shall come up in the light of the judgment throne, and while all hearts are being revealed God will ask you what you did to help them.

There is another layer of poverty and destitution, not so squalid, but almost as helpless. You hear the incessant wailing for bread and clothes and fire. Their eyes are sunken. Their cheek-bones stand out. Their hands are damp with slow consumption. Their flesh is puffed up with dropsies. Their breath is like that of the charnel-house. They hear the roar of the wheels of fashion over head, and the gay laughter of men and maidens, and wonder why God gave to others so much and to them so little. Some of them thrust into an infidelity like that of the poor German girl who, when told in the midst of her wretchedness that God was good, said; "No, no good God. Just look at me. No good God."

In this cluster of cities, whose cry of want I this day interpret, there are said to be, as far as I can figure it up from the reports, about two hundred and ninety thousand honest poor who are dependent upon individual, city, and state charities. If all their voices could come up at once, it would be a groan that would shake the foundations of the city, and bring all earth and heaven to the rescue. But, for the most part, it suffers unexpressed. It sits in silence, gnashing its teeth, and sucking the blood of its own arteries, waiting for the judgment day. Oh, I should not wonder if on that day it would be found out that some of us had some things that belonged to them; some extra garment which might have made them comfortable in these cold days; some bread thrust into the ash-barrel that might have appeased their hunger for a little while; some wasted candle or gas-jet that might have kindled up their darkness; some fresco on the ceiling that would have given them a roof; some jewel which, brought to that orphan girl in time, might have kept her from being crowded off the precipices of an unclean life; some New Testament that would have told them of him who "came to seek and save that which was lost." Oh, this wave of vagrancy and hunger and nakedness that dashes against our front door step; I wonder if you hear it and see it as much as I hear it and see it. This last week I have been almost frenzied with the perpetual cry for help from all classes and from all nations, knocking, knocking, ringing, ringing, until I dare not have more than one decent pair of shoes, nor more than one decent coat, nor more than one decent hat, lest in the last day it be found that I have something that belongs to them, and Christ shall turn to me and say: "Inasmuch as ye did it *not* to these, ye did it *not* to me." If the roofs of all the houses of destitution could be lifted so we could look down into them just as God looks, whose nerves would be strong enough to stand it? And yet there they are. The forty-five thousand sewing-women in these three cities, some of them in hunger and cold, working night after night, until sometimes the blood spurts from nostril and lip. How well their grief was voiced by that despairing woman who stood by her invalid husband and invalid child, and said to the city missionary: "I am down-hearted. Everything's against us; and then there are other things." "What other things?" said the city missionary. "Oh," she replied, "my sin." "What do you mean by that?" "Well," she said, "I never hear or see anything good. It's work from Monday morning to Saturday night, and then when Sunday comes I can't go out, and I walk the floor, and it makes me tremble to think that I have got to meet God. O sir, it's so hard for us. We have to work so, and then we have so much trouble, and then we are getting along so poorly; and see this wee little thing growing weaker and weaker; and then to think we are not getting nearer to God, but floating away from him. O sir, I do wish I was ready to die."

I should not wonder if they had a good deal better time than we in the future, to make up for the fact that they had such a bad time here. It would be just like Jesus to say: "Come up and take the highest seats. You suffered with me on earth; now be glorified with me in heaven." O thou weeping One of Bethany! O thou dying One of the cross! Have mercy on the starving, freezing, homeless poor of these great cities!

I have preached this sermon for four or five practical reasons: Because I want you to know who are the uprooting classes of society. Because I want you to be more discriminating in your charities. Because I want your hearts open with generosity, and your hands open with charity. Because I want you to be made the sworn friends of all city evangelization, and all newsboys' lodging houses, and all Howard Missions, and Children's Aid Societies. Aye, I have preached it because I want you this week to send to the Dorcas Society all the cast-off clothing, that under the skillful manipulation of our wives and mothers and sisters and daughters, these garments may be fitted on the cold, bare feet, and on the shivering limbs of the destitute. I should not wonder if that hat that you give should come back a jeweled coronet, of if that garment that you this week hand out from your wardrobe should mysteriously be whitened, and somehow wrought into the Savior's own robe, so in the last day he would run his hand over it, and say: "I was naked, and ye clothed me." That would be putting your garments to glorious uses.

But more than that, I have preached the sermon because I thought in the contrast you would see how very kindly God had dealt with you, and I thought that thousands of you would go to-day to your comfortable homes, and sit at your well-filled tables, and at the warm registers, and look at the round faces of your children, and that then you would burst into tears at the review of God's goodness to you, and that you would go to your room this afternoon and lock the door, and kneel down, and say: "O Lord, I have been an ingrate; make me thy child. O Lord, there are so many hungry and unclad and unsheltered to-day, I thank thee that all my life thou hast taken such good care of me. O Lord, there are so many sick and crippled children to-day, I thank thee mine are well, some of them on earth, some of them in heaven. Thy goodness, O Lord, breaks me down. Take me once, and forever. Sprinkled as I was many years ago at the altar, while my mother held me, now I consecrate my soul to thee in a holier baptism of repenting tears.

> "For sinners, Lord, Thou cam'st to bleed,
> And I'm a sinner vile indeed;
> Lord, I believe Thy grace is free,
> O magnify that grace in me."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WORSHIP OF THE GOLDEN CALF.

"And he took the calf which they had made, and burnt it in the fire, and ground it to powder, and strewed it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it."—Exodus xxxii: 20.

People will have a god of some kind, and they prefer one of their own making. Here come the Israelites, breaking off their golden earrings, the men as well as the women, for in those times there were masculine as well as feminine decorations. Where did they get these beautiful gold earrings, coming up as they did from the desert? Oh, they "borrowed" them of the Egyptians when they left Egypt. These earrings are piled up into a pyramid of glittering beauty. "Any more earrings to bring?" says Aaron. None. Fire is kindled; the earrings are melted and poured into a mold, not of an eagle or a war charger, but of a calf; the gold cools off; the mold is taken away, and the idol is set up on its four legs. An altar is built in front of the shining calf. Then the people throw up their arms, and gyrate, and shriek, and dance mightily, and worship. Moses has been six weeks on Mount Sinai, and he comes back and hears the howling and sees the dancing of these golden-calf fanatics, and he loses his patience, and he takes the two plates of stone on which were written the Ten Commandments and flings them so hard against a rock that they split all to pieces. When a man gets mad he is very apt to break all the Ten Commandments! Moses rushes in and he takes this calf-god and throws it into a hot fire, until it is melted all out of shape, and then pulverizes it—not by the modern appliance of nitro-muriatic acid, but by the ancient appliance of nitre, or by the old-fashioned file. He makes for the people a most nauseating draught. He takes this pulverized golden calf and throws it in the only brook which is accessible, and the people are compelled to drink of that brook or not drink at all. But they did not drink all the glittering stuff thrown on the surface. Some of it flows on down the surface of the brook to the river, and then flows on down the river to the sea, and the sea takes it up and bears it to the mouth of all the rivers, and when the tides set back, the remains of this golden calf are carried up into the Hudson, and the East river, and the Thames, and the Clyde, and the Tiber, and men go out and they skim the glittering surface, and they bring it ashore and they make another golden calf, and California and Australia break off their golden earrings to augment the pile, and in the fires of financial excitement and struggle all these things are melted together, and while we stand looking and wondering what will come of it, lo! we find that the golden calf of Israelitish worship has become the golden calf of European and American worship.

I shall describe to you the god spoken of in the text, his temple, his altar of sacrifice, the music that is made in his temple, and then the final breaking up of the whole congregation of idolaters.

Put aside this curtain and you see the golden calf of modern idolatry. It is not like other idols, made out of stocks or stone, but it has an ear so sensitive that it can hear the whispers on Wall street and Third street and State street, and the footfalls in the Bank of England, and the flutter of a Frenchman's heart on the Bourse.

It has an eye so keen that it can see the rust on the farm of Michigan wheat and the insect in the Maryland peach-orchard, and the trampled grain under the hoof of the Russian war charger. It is so mighty that it swings any way it will the world's shipping. It has its foot on all the merchantmen and the steamers. It started the American Civil War, and under God stopped it, and it decided the Turko-Russian contest. One broker in September, 1869, in New York, shouted, "One hundred and sixty for a million!" and the whole continent shivered. This golden calf of the text has its right front foot in New York, its left front foot in Chicago, its right back foot in Charleston, its left back foot in New Orleans, and when it shakes itself it shakes the world. Oh! this is a mighty god—the golden calf of the world's worship.

But every god must have its temple, and this golden calf of the text is no exception. Its temple is vaster than St. Paul's of the English, and St. Peter's of the Italians, and the Alhambra of the Spaniards, and the Parthenon of the Greeks, and the Mahal Taj of the Hindoos, and all the other cathedrals put together. Its pillars are grooved and fluted with gold, and its ribbed arches are hovering gold, and its chandeliers are descending gold, and its floors are tesselated gold, and its vaults are crowded heaps of gold, and its spires and domes are soaring gold, and its organ pipes are resounding gold, and its pedals are tramping gold, and its stops pulled out are flashing gold, while standing at the head of the temple, as the presiding deity, are the hoofs and shoulders and eyes and ears and nostrils of the calf of gold.

Further: every god must have not only its temple, but its altar of sacrifice, and this golden calf of the text is no exception. Its altar is not made out of stone as other altars, but out of counting-room desks and fire-proof safes, and it is a broad, a long, a high altar. The victims sacrificed on it are the Swartouts, and the Ketchams, and the Fisks, and the Tweeds, and the Mortons, and ten thousand other people who are slain before this golden calf. What does this god care about the groans and struggles of the victims before it? With cold, metallic eye it looks on and yet lets them suffer. Oh! heaven and earth, what an altar! what a sacrifice of body, mind, and soul! The physical health of a great multitude is flung on this sacrificial altar. They cannot sleep, and they take chloral and morphine and intoxicants. Some of them struggle in a nightmare of stocks, and at one o'clock in the morning suddenly rise up shouting: "A thousand shares of New York Central—one hundred and eight and a-half! take it!" until the whole family is affrighted, and the speculators fall back on their pillows and sleep until they are awakened again by a "corner" in the Pacific Mail, or a sudden "rise" of Rock Island. Their nerves gone, their digestion gone, their brain gone, they die. The clergyman comes in and reads the funeral service: "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." Mistake. They did not "die in the Lord;" the golden calf kicked them!

The trouble is, when men sacrifice themselves on this altar suggested in the text, they not only sacrifice themselves, but they sacrifice their families. If a man by an ill course is determined to go to perdition, I suppose you will have to let him go; but he puts his wife and children in an equipage that is the amazement of the avenues, and the driver lashes the horses into two whirlwinds, and the spokes flash in the sun, and the golden headgear of the harness gleams, until Black Calamity takes the bits of the horses and stops them, and shouts to the luxuriant occupants of the equipage: "Get out!"

They get out. They get down. That husband and father flung his family so hard they never got up again. There was the mark on them for life—the mark of a split hoof—the death-dealing hoof of the golden calf.

Solomon offered in one sacrifice, on one occasion, twenty-two thousand oxen and one hundred and twenty thousand sheep; but that was a tame sacrifice compared with the multitude of men who are sacrificing themselves on this altar of the golden calf, and sacrificing their families with them. The soldiers of General Havelock, in India, walked literally ankle deep in the blood of the "house of massacre," where two hundred women and children had been slain by the Sepoys; but the blood around about this altar of the golden calf flows up to the knee, flows to the girdle, flows to the shoulder, flows to the lip. Great God of heaven and earth, have mercy! The golden calf has none.

Still the degrading worship goes on, and the devotees kneel and kiss the dust, and count their golden beads, and cross themselves with the blood of their own sacrifice. The music rolls on under the arches; it is made of clinking silver and clinking gold, and the rattling specie of the banks and brokers' shops, and the voices of all the exchanges. The soprano of the worship is carried by the timid voices of men who have just begun to speculate; while the deep bass rolls out from those who for ten years of iniquity have been doubly damned. Chorus of voices rejoicing over what they have made. Chorus of voices wailing over what they have lost. This temple of which I speak stands open day and night, and there is the glittering god with his four feet on broken hearts, and there is the smoking altar of sacrifice, new victims every moment on it, and there are the kneeling devotees; and the doxology of the worship rolls on, while Death stands with mouldy and skeleton arm beating time for the chorus—"More! more! more!"

Some people are very much surprised at the actions of folk in the Stock Exchange, New York. Indeed, it is a scene sometimes that paralyzes description, and is beyond the imagination of any one who has never looked in. What snapping of finger and thumb and wild gesticulation, and raving like hyenas, and stamping like buffaloes, and swaying to and fro, and jostling and running one upon another, and deafening uproar, until the president of the Exchange strikes with his mallet four or five times, crying, "Order! order!" and the astonished spectator goes out into the fresh air feeling that he has escaped from pandemonium. What does it all mean? I will tell you what it means. The devotees of every heathen temple cut themselves to pieces, and yell and gyrate. This vociferation and gyration of the Stock Exchange is all appropriate. This is the worship of the golden calf.

But my text suggests that this worship must be broken up, as the behavior of Moses in my text indicated. There are those who say that this golden calf spoken of in my text was hollow, and merely plated with gold; otherwise, they say, Moses could not have carried it. I do not know that; but somehow, perhaps by the assistance of his friends, he takes up this golden calf, which is an open insult to God and man, and throws it into the fire, and it is melted, and then it comes out and is cooled off, and by some chemical appliance, or by an old-fashioned file, it is pulverized, and it is thrown into the brook, and, as a punishment, the people are compelled to drink the nauseating stuff. So, my hearers, you may depend upon it that God will burn and he will grind to pieces the golden calf of modern idolatry, and he will compel the people in their agony to drink it. If not before, it will be so on the last day. I know not where the fire will begin, whether at the "Battery" or Central Park, whether at Fulton Ferry or at Bushwick, whether at Shoreditch, London, or West End; but it will be a very hot blaze. All the Government securities of the United States and Great Britain will curl up in the first blast. All the money safes and depositing vaults will melt under the first touch. The sea will burn like tinder, and the shipping will be abandoned forever. The melting gold in the broker's window will burst through the melted window-glass and into the street; but the flying population will not stop to scoop it up. The cry of "Fire" from the mountain will be answered by the cry of "Fire" in the plain. The conflagration will burn out from the continent toward the sea, and then burn in from the sea toward the land. New York and London with one cut of the red scythe of destruction will go down. Twenty-five thousand miles of conflagration! The earth will wrap itself round and round in shroud of flame, and lie down to perish. What then will become of your golden calf? Who then so poor as to worship it? Melted, or between the upper and the nether millstone of falling mountains ground to powder. Dagon down. Moloch down. Juggernaut down. Golden calf down.

But, my friends, every day is a day of judgment, and God is all the time grinding to pieces the golden calf. Merchants of New York and London, what is the characteristic of this time in which we live? "Bad," you say. Professional men, what is the characteristic of the times in which we live? "Bad," you say. Though I should be in a minority of one, I venture the opinion that these are the best times we have had in fifteen years, for the reason that God is teaching the world, as never before, that old-fashioned honesty is the only thing that will stand. In the past few months we have learned as never before that forgeries will not pay; that the watering of stock will not pay; that the spending of fifty thousand dollars on country seats and a palatial city residence, when there are only thirty thousand dollars income, will not pay; that the appropriation of trust funds to our own private speculation will not pay. We had a great national tumor, in the shape of fictitious prosperity. We called it national enlargement; instead of calling it enlargement, we might better have called it a swelling. It has been a tumor, and God is cutting it out—has cut it out, and the nation will get well and will come back to the principles of our fathers and grandfathers when twice three made six instead of sixty, and when the apples at the bottom of the barrel were just as good as the apples on the top of the barrel, and a silk handkerchief was not half cotton, and a man who wore a five-dollar coat paid for was more honored than a man who wore a fifty-dollar coat not paid for.

The golden calf of our day, like the one of the text, is very apt to be made out of borrowed gold. These Israelites of the text borrowed the earrings of the Egyptians, and then melted them into a god. That is the way the golden calf is made nowadays. A great many housekeepers, not paying for the articles they get, borrow of the grocer and the baker and the butcher and the dry-goods seller. Then the retailer borrows of the wholesale dealer. Then the wholesale dealer borrows of the capitalist, and we borrow, and borrow, and borrow, until the community is divided into two classes, those who borrow and those who are borrowed of; and after a while the capitalist wants his money and he rushes upon the wholesale dealer, and the wholesale dealer wants his money and he rushes upon the retailer, and the retailer wants his money and he rushes upon the consumer, and we all go down together. There is many a man in this day who rides in a carriage and owes the blacksmith for the tire, and the wheelwright for the wheel, and the trimmer for the curtain, and the driver for unpaid wages, and the harness-maker for the bridle, and the furrier for the robe, while from the tip of the carriage tongue clear back to the tip of the camel's-hair shawl fluttering out of the back of the vehicle, everything is paid for by notes that have been three times renewed.

I tell you, sirs, that in this country we will never get things right until we stop borrowing, and pay as we go. It is this temptation to borrow, and borrow, and borrow, that keeps the people everlastingly praying to the golden calf for help, and just at the minute they expect the help the golden calf treads on them. The judgments of God, like Moses in the text, will rush in and break up this worship; and I say, let the work go on until every man shall learn to speak truth with his neighbor, and those who make engagements shall feel themselves bound to keep them, and when a man who will not repent of his business iniquity, but goes on wishing to satiate his cannibal appetite by devouring widows' houses, shall, by the law of the land, be compelled to exchange the brown stone front on Madison Avenue or Beacon Hill for Newgate or Sing Sing. Let the golden calf perish!

But, my friends, if we have made this world our god, when we come to die we will see our idol demolished. How much of this world are you going to take with you into the next? Will you have two pockets—one in each side of your shroud? Will you cushion your coffin with bonds and mortgages and certificates of stock? Ah! no

The ferry-boat that crosses this Jordan takes no baggage —nothing heavier than a spirit. You may, perhaps, take five hundred dollars with you two or three miles, in the shape of funeral trappings, to Greenwood, but you will have to leave them there. It would not be safe for you to lie down there with a gold watch or a diamond ring; it would be a temptation to the pillagers. Ah, my friends! if we have made this world our god, when we die we will see our idol ground to pieces by our pillow, and we will have to drink it in bitter regrets for the wasted opportunities of a lifetime. Soon we will be gone. O! this is a fleeting world, it is a dying world. A man who had worshiped it all his days in his dying moment described himself when he said: "Fool! fool! fool!"

I want you to change temples, and to give up the worship of this unsatisfying and cruel god for the service of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is the gold that will never crumble. Here are securities that will never fail. Here are banks that will never break. Here is an altar on which there has been one sacrifice once for all. Here is a God who will comfort you when you are in trouble, and soothe you when you are sick, and save you when you die. When your parents have breathed their last, and the old, wrinkled, and trembling hands can no more be put upon your head for a blessing, he will be to you father and mother both, giving you the defense of the one and the comfort of the other; and when your children go away from you, the sweet darlings, you will not kiss them good-by for ever. He only wants to hold them for you a little while. He will give them back to you again, and he will have them all waiting for you at the gates of eternal welcome. Oh! what a God he is! He will allow you to come so close this morning that you can put your arms around his neck, while he in response will put his arms around your neck, and all the windows of heaven will be hoisted to let the redeemed look out and see the spectacle of a rejoicing Father and a returned prodigal locked in glorious embrace. Quit worshiping the golden calf, and bow this day before him in whose presence we must all appear when the world has turned to ashes and the scorched parchment of the sky shall be rolled together like an historic scroll.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DRY-GOODS RELIGION.

"Whose adorning, let it not be. . . .putting on of apparel."—
1 Peter iii: 3.

My subject is dry-goods religion. That we should all be clad, is proved by the opening of the first wardrobe in Paradise, with its apparel of dark green. That we should all, as far as our means allow us, be beautifully and gracefully appareled, is proved by the fact that God never made a wave but he gilded it with golden sunbeams, or a tree but he garlanded it with blossoms, or a sky but he studded it with stars, or allowed even the smoke of a furnace to ascend but he columned and turreted and domed and scrolled it into outlines of indescribable gracefulness. When I see the apple-orchards of the spring and the pageantry of the autumnal forests, I come to the conclusion that if nature ever does join the Church, while she may be a Quaker in the silence of her worship, she never will be a Quaker in the style of her dress. Why the notches of a fern leaf, or the stamen of a water lily? Why, when the day departs, does it let the folding-doors of heaven stay open so long, when it might go in so quickly? One summer morning I saw an army of a million spears, each one adorned with a diamond of the first water—I mean the grass with the dew on it. When the prodigal came home his father not only put a coat on his back, but jewelry on his hand. Christ wore a beard. Paul, the bachelor apostle, not afflicted with any sentimentality, admired the arrangement of a woman's hair when he said, in his epistle, "if a woman have long hair, it is a glory unto her." There will be fashion in heaven as on earth, but it will be a different kind of fashion. It will decide the color of the dress; and the population of that country, by a beautiful law, will wear white. I say these things as a background to my sermon, to show you that I have no prim, precise, prudish, or cast-iron theories on the subject of human apparel. But the goddess of fashion has set up her throne in this country and at the sound of the timbrels we are all expected to fall down and worship. The old and new testament of *her* bible are *Madame Demorest's Magazine* and *Harper's Bazar*. Her altars smoke with the sacrifice of the bodies, minds, and souls of ten thousand victims. In her temple four people stand in the organ-loft, and from them there comes down a cold drizzle of music, freezing on the ears of her worshipers. This goddess of fashion has become a rival of the Lord of heaven and earth, and it is high time that we unlimbered our batteries against this idolatry. When I come to count the victims of fashion I find as many masculine as feminine. Men make an easy tirade against woman, as though she were the chief worshiper at this idolatrous shrine, and no doubt some men in the more conspicuous part of the pew have already cast glances at the more retired part of the pew, their look a prophecy of a generous distribu- My sermon shall be as appropriate for one end of the pew as for the other.

Men are as much the idolators of fashion as women, but they sacrifice on a different part of the altar. With men, the fashion goes to cigars and club-rooms and yachting parties and wine suppers. In the United States the men chew up and smoke one hundred millions of dollars' worth of tobacco every year. That is their fashion. In London, not long ago, a man died who started in life with seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars, but he ate it all up in gluttonies, sending his agents to all parts of the earth for some rare delicacy for the palate, sometimes one plate of food costing him three or four hundred dollars. He ate up his whole fortune, and had only one guinea left; with that he bought a woodcock, and had it dressed in the very best style, ate it, gave two hours for digestion, then walked out on Westminster Bridge and threw himself into the Thames, and died, doing on a large scale what you and I have often seen done on a small scale. But men do not abstain from millinery and elaboration of skirt through any superiority of humility. It is only because such appendages would be a blockade to business. What would sashes and trains three and a half yards long do in a stock market? And yet men are the disciples of fashion just as much as women. Some of them wear boots so tight they can hardly walk in the paths of righteousness. And there are men who buy expensive suits of clothes and never pay for them, and who go through the streets in great stripes of color like animated checker-boards. Then there are multitudes of men who, not satisfied with the bodies the Lord gave them, are padded so that their shoulders shall be square, carrying around a small cotton plantation. And I understand a great many of them now paint their eyebrows and their lips, and I have heard from good authority that there are multitudes of men in Brooklyn and New York—men—things have got to such an awful pass—multitudes of men wearing corsets! I say these things because I want to show you that I am impartial in my discourse, and that both sexes, in the language of the Surrogate's office, shall "share and share alike." As God may help me, I shall show you what are the destroying and deathful influences of inordinate fashion.

The first baleful influence I notice is in fraud, illimitable and ghastly. Do you know that Arnold of the Revolution proposed to sell his country in order to get money to support his wife's wardrobe? I declare here before God and this people that the effort to keep up expensive establishments in this country is sending more business men to temporal perdition than all other causes combined. What was it that sent Gilman to the penitentiary, and Philadelphia Morton to the watering of stocks, and the life insurance presidents to perjured statements about their assets, and has completely upset our American finances? What was it that overthrew Belknap, the United States Secretary at Washington, the crash of whose fall shook the continent? But why should I go to these famous defaultings to show what men will do in order to keep up great home style and expensive wardrobe, when you and I know scores of men who are put to their wit's end, and are lashed from January to December in the attempt. Our Washington politicians may theorize until the expiration of their terms of office as to the best way of improving our monetary condition in this country; it will be of no use, and things will be no better until we learn to put on our heads, and backs, and feet, and hands no more than we can pay for.

There are clerks in stores and banks on limited salaries, who, in the vain attempt to keep the wardrobe of their family as showy as other folk's wardrobes, are dying of muffs, and diamonds, and camel's hair shawls, and high hats, and they have nothing left except what they give to cigars and wine suppers, and they die before their time and they will expect us ministers to preach about them as though they were the victims of early piety, and after a high-class funeral, with silver handles at the side of their coffin, of extraordinary brightness, it will be found out that the undertaker is cheated out of his legitimate expenses! Do not send to me to preach the funeral sermon of a man who dies like that. I will blurt out the whole truth, and tell that he was strangled to death by his wife's ribbons! The country is dressed to death. You are not surprised to find that the putting up of one public building in New York cost millions of dollars more than it ought to have cost, when you find that the man who gave out the contracts paid more than five thousand dollars for his daughter's wedding dress. Cashmeres of a thousand dollars each are not rare on Broadway. It is estimated that there are five thousand women in these two cities who have expended on their personal array two thousand dollars a year.

What are men to do in order to keep up such home wardrobes? Steal--that is the only respectable thing they can do! During the last fifteen years there have been innumerable fine businesses shipwrecked on the wardrobe. The temptation comes in this way: A man thinks more of his family than of all the world outside, and if they spend the evening in describing to him the superior wardrobe of the family across the street, that they cannot bear the sight of, the man is thrown on his gallantry and his pride of family, and, without translating his feelings into plain language, he goes into extortion and issuing of false stock, and skillful penmanship in writing somebody else's name at the foot of a promissory note; and they all go down together—the husband to the prison, the wife to the sewing machine, the children to be taken care of by those who were called poor relations. O! for some new Shakespeare to arise and write the tragedy of human clothes.

Act the first of the tragedy.—A plain but beautiful home. Enter, the newly-married pair. Enter, simplicity of manner and behavior. Enter, as much happiness as is ever found in one home.

Act the second.—Discontent with the humble home. Enter, envy. Enter, jealousy. Enter, desire of display.

Act the third.—Enlargement of expenses. Enter, all the queenly dressmakers. Enter, the French milliners.

Act the fourth.—The tip-top of society. Enter, princes and princesses of New York life. Enter, magnificent plate and equipage. Enter, everything splendid.

Act the fifth, and last.—Winding up of the scene. Enter, the assignee. Enter, the sheriff. Enter, the creditors. Enter, humiliation. Enter, the wrath of God. Enter, the contempt of society. Enter, death. Now, let the silk curtain drop on the stage. The farce is ended, and the lights are out.

Will you forgive me if I say in tersest shape possible that some of the men in this country have to forge and to perjure and to swindle to pay for their wives' dresses? I *will* say it, whether you forgive me or not!

Again, inordinate fashion is the foe of all Christian alms-giving. Men and women put so much in personal display that they often have nothing for God and the cause of suffering humanity. A Christian man cracking his Palais Royal glove across the back by shutting up his hand to hide the one cent he puts into the poor-box! A Christian woman, at the story of the Hottentots, crying copious tears into a twenty-five dollar handkerchief, and then giving a two-cent piece to the collection, thrusting it down under the bills so people will not know but it was a ten-dollar gold piece! One hundred dollars for incense to fashion. Two cents for God. God gives us ninety cents out of every dollar. The other ten cents by command of His Bible belong to Him. Is not God liberal according to this tithing system laid down in the Old Testament—is not God liberal in giving us ninety cents out of a dollar, when he takes but ten? We do not like that. We want to have ninety-nine cents for ourselves and one for God.

Now, I would a great deal rather steal ten cents from you than God. I think one reason why a great many people do not get along in worldly accumulation faster is because they do not observe this divine rule. God says: "Well, if that man is not satisfied with ninety cents of a dollar, then I will take the whole dollar, and I will give it to the man or woman who is honest with me." The greatest obstacle to charity in the Christian church to-day is the fact that men expend so much money on their table, and women so much on their dress, they have got nothing left for the work of God and the world's betterment. In my first settlement at Belleville, New Jersey, the cause of missions was being presented one Sabbath, and a plea for the charity of the people was being made, when an old Christian man in the audience lost his balance, and said right out in the midst of the sermon: "Mr. Talmage, how are we to give liberally to these grand and glorious causes when our families dress as they do?" I did not answer that question. It was the only time in my life when I had nothing to say!

Again, inordinate fashion is distraction to public worship. You know very well there are a good many people who come to church just as they go to the races, to see who will come out first. What a flutter it makes in church when some woman with extraordinary display of fashion comes in. "What a love of a bonnet!" says some one. "What a perfect fright!" say five hundred. For the most merciless critics in the world are fashion critics. Men and women with souls to be saved passing the hour in wondering where that man got his cravat, or what store that woman patronizes. In many of our churches the preliminary exercises are taken up with the discussion of wardrobes. It is pitiable. Is it not wonderful that the Lord does not strike the meeting-houses with lightning! What distraction of public worship! Dying men and women, whose bodies are soon to be turned into dust, yet before three worlds strutting like peacocks, the awful question of the soul's destiny submerged by the question of Creedmore polonaise, and navy blue velvet and long fan train skirt, long enough to drag up the church aisle, the husband's store, office, shop, factory, fortune, and the admiration of half the people in the building. Men and women come late to church to show their clothes. People sitting down in a pew or taking up a hymn book, all absorbed at the same time in personal array, to sing:

"Rise, my soul, and stretch thy wings.
  Thy better portion trace;
Rise from transitory things,
  Toward heaven, thy native place!"

I adopt the Episcopalian prayer and say: "Good Lord deliver us!"

Insatiate fashion also belittles the intellect. Our minds are enlarged or they dwindle just in proportion to the importance of the subject on which we constantly dwell. Can you imagine anything more dwarfing to the human intellect than the study of fashion? I see men on the street who, judging from their elaboration, I think must have taken two hours to arrange their apparel. After a few years of that kind of absorption, which one of McAllister's magnifying glasses will be powerful enough to make the man's character visible? What will be left of a woman's intellect after giving years and years to the discussion of such questions as the comparison between knife-pleats and box-pleats, and borderings of grey fox fur or black martin, or the comparative excellence of circulars of repped Antwerp silk lined with blue fox fur or with Hudson Bay sable? They all land in idiocy. I have seen men at the summer watering-places, through fashion the mere wreck of what they once were. Sallow of cheek. Meagre of limb. Hollow at the chest. Showing no animation save in rushing across a room to pick up a lady's fan. Simpering along the corridors, the same compliments they simpered twenty years ago. A New York lawyer last summer at United States Hotel, Saratoga, within our hearing, rushed across a room to say to a sensible woman, "You are as sweet as peaches!" The fools of fashion are myriad. Fashion not only destroys the body, but it makes idiotic the intellect.

Yet, my friends, I have given you only the milder phase of this evil. It shuts a great multitude out of heaven. The first peal of thunder that shook Sinai declared: "Thou shalt have no other God before me," and you will have to choose between the goddess of fashion and the Christian God. There are a great many seats in heaven, and they are all easy seats, but not one seat for the devotee of fashion. Heaven is for meek and quiet spirits. Heaven is for those who think more of their souls than of their bodies. Heaven is for those who have more joy in Christian charity than in dry-goods religion. Why, if you with your idolatry of fashion should somehow get into heaven, you would be for putting a French roof on the "house of many mansions," and making plaits and Hamburg embroidery and flounces in the robes, and you would be for introducing the patterns of Butterick's *Quarterly Delineator*. Give up this idolatry of fashion, or give up heaven. What would you do standing beside the Countess of Huntington, whose joy it was to build chapels for the poor, or with that Christian woman of Boston, who fed fifteen hundred children of the street at Faneuil Hall on New Year's Day, giving out as a sort of doxology at the end of the meeting a pair of shoes to each one of them; or those Dorcases of modern society who have consecrated their needles to the Lord, and who will get eternal reward for every stitch they take. O! men and women, give up the idolatry of fashion. The rivalries and the competitions of such a life are a stupendous wretchedness. You will always find some one with brighter array and with more palatial residence, and with lavender kid gloves that make a tighter fit. And if you buy this thing and wear it you will wish you had bought something else and worn it. And the frets of such a life will bring the crows' feet to your temples before they are due, and when you come to die you will have a miserable time. I have seen men and women of fashion die, and I never saw one of them die well. The trappings off, there they lay on the tumbled pillow, and there were just two things that bothered them—a wasted life and a coming eternity. I could not pacify them, for their body, mind, and soul, had been exhausted in the worship of fashion, and they could not appreciate the gospel. When I knelt by their bedside they were mumbling out their regrets and saying, "O God! O God!" Their garments hung up in the wardrobe, never again to be seen by them. Without any exception, so far as my memory serves me, they died without hope, and went into eternity unprepared. The two most ghastly death-beds on earth are, the one where a man dies of delirium tremens, and the other where a woman dies after having sacrificed all her faculties of body, mind, and soul in the worship of fashion. My friends, we must appear in judgment to answer for what we have worn on our bodies as well as for what repentances we have exercised with our souls. On that day I see coming in, Beau Brummel of the last century, without his cloak, like which all England got a cloak; and without his cane, like which all England got a cane; without his snuff-box, like which all England got a snuff-box—he, the fop of the ages, particular about everything but his morals; and Aaron Burr, without the letters that down to old age he showed in pride, to prove his early wicked gallantries; and Absalom without his hair; and Marchioness Pompadour without her titles; and Mrs. Arnold, the belle of Wall street, when that was the center of fashion, without her fripperies of vesture.

And in great haggardness they shall go away into eternal expatriation; while among the queens of heavenly society will be found Vashti, who wore the modest veil before the palatial bacchanalians; and Hannah, who annually made a little coat for Samuel at the temple; and Grandmother Lois, the ancestress of Timothy, who imitated her virtue; and Mary, who gave Jesus Christ to the world; and many of you, the wives and mothers and sisters and daughters of the present Christian Church, who through great tribulation are entering into the kingdom of God. Christ announced who would make up the royal family of heaven when he said, "Whosoever doeth the will of God, the same is my brother, my sister, my mother."

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RESERVOIRS SALTED.

"And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, I pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my Lord seeth; but the water is naught, and the ground barren And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein. And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast the salt in there, and said, Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death or barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day."—2 Kings ii: 19–22.

It is difficult to estimate how much of the prosperity and health of a city are dependent upon good water. The day when, through well-laid pipes and from safe reservoir, an abundance of water, from Croton or Ridgewood, is brought into the city, is appropriately celebrated with oration and pyrotechnic display. Thank God every day for clear, bright, beautiful, sparkling water, as it drops in the shower, or tosses up in the fountain, or rushes out at the hydrant.

The city of Jericho, notwithstanding all its physical and commercial advantages, was lacking in this important element. There was enough water, but it was diseased, and the people were crying out by reason thereof. Elisha the prophet comes to the rescue. He says: "Get me a new cruse; fill it with salt and bring it to me." So the cruse of salt was brought to the prophet, and I see him walking out to the general reservoir, and he takes that salt and throws it into the reservoir, and lo! all the impurities depart, through a supernatural and divine influence, and the waters are good and fresh and clear, and all the people clap their hands and lift up their faces in their gladness. Water for Jericho—clear, bright, beautiful, God-given water!

For several Sabbath mornings I have pointed out to you the fountains of municipal corruption, and this morning I propose to show you what are the means for the rectification of those fountains. There are four or five kinds of salt that have a cleansing tendency. So far as God may help me this morning, I shall bring a cruse of salt to the work, and empty it into the great reservoir of municipal crime, sin, shame, ignorance, and abomination.

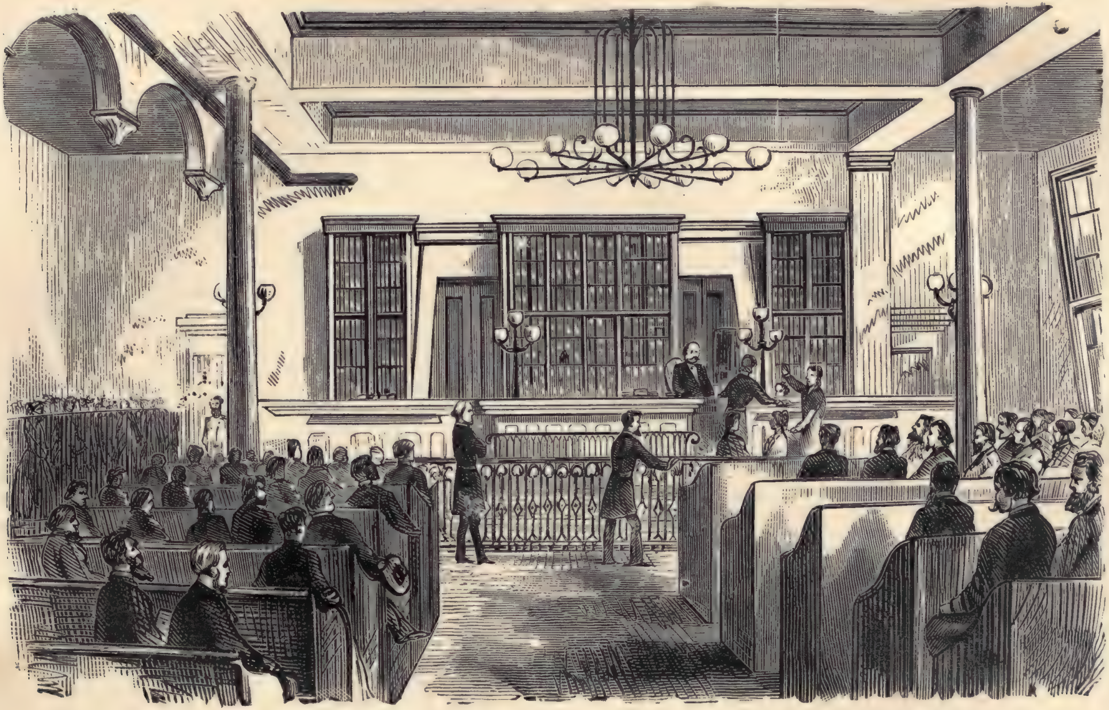
In this work of cleansing our cities, I have first to remark that *there is a work for the broom and the shovel that nothing else can do.* There always has been an intimate connection between iniquity and dirt. The filthy parts of the great cities are always the most iniquitous parts. The gutters and the pavements of the Fourth Ward, New York, illustrate and symbolize the character of the people in the Fourth Ward.

The first thing that a bad man does when he is converted is thoroughly to wash himself. There were, this morning, on the way to the different churches, thousands of men in proper apparel who, before their conversion, were unfit in their Sabbath dress. When on the Sabbath I see a man uncleanly in his dress, my suspicions in regard to his moral character are aroused, and they are always well founded. So as to allow no excuse for lack of ablution, God has cleft the continents with rivers and lakes, and has sunk five great oceans, and all the world ought to be clean. Away, then, with the dirt from our cities, not only because the physical health needs an ablution, but because all the great moral and religious interests of the cities demand it as a positive necessity. A filthy city always has been and always will be a wicked city.

Another corrective influence that we would bring to bear upon the evils of our great cities is *a Christian printing-press.* The newspapers of any place are the test of its morality or immorality. The newsboy who runs along the street with a roll of papers under his arm is a tremendous force that cannot be turned aside nor resisted, and at his every step the city is elevated or degraded. This hungry, all-devouring American mind must have something to read, and upon editors and authors and book-publishers and parents and teachers rest the responsibility of what they shall read. Almost every man you meet has a book in his hand or a newspaper in his pocket. What book is it you have in your hand? What newspaper is it you have in your pocket? Ministers may preach, reformers may plan, philanthropists may toil for the elevation of the suffering and the criminal, but until all the newspapers of the land and all the booksellers of the land set themselves against an iniquitous literature—until then we will be fighting against fearful odds. Every time the cylinders of Harper or Appleton or Ticknor or Peterson or Lippincott turn, they make the earth quake. From them goes forth a thought like an angel of light to feed and bless the world, or like an angel of darkness to smite it with corruption and sin and shame and death. May God by His omnipotent Spirit purify and elevate the American printing-press!

I go on further and say that *we must depend upon the school for a great deal of correcting influence.* Community can no more afford to have ignorant men in its midst than it can afford to have uncaged hyenas. Ignorance is the mother of hydra-headed crime. Thirty-one per cent. of all the criminals of New York State can neither read nor write. Intellectual darkness is generally the precursor of moral darkness. I know there are educated outlaws—men who, through their sharpness of intellect, are made more dangerous. They use their fine penmanship in signing other people's names, and their science in ingenious burglaries, and their fine manners in adroit libertinism. They go their round of sin with well-cut apparel, and dangling jewelry, and watches of eighteen karats, and kid gloves. They are refined, educated, magnificent villains. But that is the exception. It is generally the case that the criminal classes are as ignorant as they are wicked. For the proof of what I say, go into the prisons and the penitentiaries, and look upon the men and women incarcerated. The dishonesty in the eye, the low passion in the lip, are not more conspicuous than the ignorance in the forehead. The ignorant classes are always the dangerous classes. Demagogues marshal them. They are helmless, and are driven before the gale.

It is high time that all city and State authority, as well as the Federal Government, appreciated the awful statistic that while years ago in this country there was set apart forty-eight millions of acres of land for school purposes, there are now in New England one hundred and ninety-one thousand people who can neither read nor write, and in the State of Pennsylvania two hundred and twenty-two thousand who can neither read nor write, and in the State of New York two hundred and forty-one thousand who can neither read nor write, while in the United States there are nearly six millions who can neither read nor write. A statistic enough to stagger and confound any man who loves his God and his country.



HALL OF JUSTICE OR TOMBS, SUNDAY MORNING CRIMINAL CASES.

Now, in view of this fact, I am in favor of compulsory education. The Eleventh ward, in New York, has five thousand children who are not in school. When parents are so bestial as to neglect this duty to the child, I say the law, with a strong hand, at the same time with a gentle hand, ought to lead these little ones into the light of intelligence and good morals. It was a beautiful *tableau* when in our city a few weeks ago, a swarthy policeman having picked up a lost child in the street, was found appeasing its cries by a stick of candy he had bought at the apple-stand. That was well done, and beautifully done. But, oh! these thousands of little ones through our streets, who are crying for the bread of knowledge and intelligence. Shall we not give it to them? The officers of the law ought to go down into the cellars, and up into the garrets, and bring out these benighted little ones, and put them under educational inflences; after they have passed through the bath and under the comb, putting before them the spelling-book, and teaching them to read the Lord's Prayer and the sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Our city ought to be father and mother both to these outcast little ones. As a recipe for the cure of much of the woe and want and crime of our city, I give the words which Thorwaldsen had chiseled on the open scroll in the hand of the statue of John Gutenberg, the inventor of the art of printing: "Let there be light!"

Still further: *reformatory societies are an important element in the rectification of the public fountains.* Without calling any of them by name, I refer more especially to those which recognize the physical as well as the moral woes of the world. There was pathos and a great deal of common sense in what the poor woman said to Dr. Guthrie when he was telling her what a very good woman she ought to be. "Oh," she said, "if you were as hungry and cold as I am, you could think of nothing else." I believe the great want of our city is the Gospel and something to eat! Faith and repentance are of infinite importance; but they cannot satisfy an empty stomach! You have to go forth in this work with the bread of eternal life in your right hand, and the bread of this life in your left hand, and then you can touch them, imitating the Lord Jesus Christ, who first broke the bread and fed the multitude in the wilderness, and then began to preach, recognizing the fact that while people are hungry they will not listen, and they will not repent. We want more common sense in the distribution of our charities; fewer magnificent theories, and more hard work. In the last war, a few hours after the battle of Antietam, I had a friend who was moving over the field, and who saw a good Christian man distributing tracts. My friend said to him: "This is no time to distribute tracts. There are three thousand men around here who are bleeding to death, who have not had bandages put on. Take care of their bodies, then give them tracts." That was well said. Look after the woes of the body, and then you will have some success in looking after the woes of the soul.

Still further: *the great remedial influence is the Gospel of Christ.* Take that down through the lanes of suffering. Take that down amid the hovels of sin. Take that up amid the mansions and palaces of your city. That is the salt that can cure all the poisoned fountains of public iniquity. Do you know that in this cluster of three cities, New York, Jersey City, and Brooklyn, there are a great multitude of homeless children? You see I speak more in regard to the youth and the children of the country, because old villains are seldom reformed, and therefore I talk more about the little ones. They sleep under the stoops, in the burned-out safe, in the wagons in the streets, on the barges, wherever they can get a board to cover them. And in the summer they sleep all night long in the parks. Their destitution is well set forth by an incident. A city missionary asked one of them: "Where is your home?" Said he: "I don't have no home, sir." "Well, where are your father and mother?" "They are dead, sir." "Did you ever hear of Jesus Christ?" "No, I don't think I ever heard of him." "Did you ever hear of God. Yes, I've heard of God. Some of the poor people think it kind of lucky at night to say something over about that before they go to sleep. Yes, sir, I've heard of him." Think of a conversation like that in a Christian city.

How many are waiting for you to come out in the spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ and rescue them from the wretchedness here! A man was trying to talk with a group of these outcasts, and read the Bible, and trying to comfort them, and he said: "My dear boys, when your father and your mother forsake you, who will take you up?" They shouted "The perlice, sir; the perlice?" Oh that the Church of God had arms long enough and hearts warm enough to take them up. How many of them there are! As I was thinking of the subject this morning, it seemed to me as though there was a great brink, and that these little ones with cut and torn feet were coming on toward it. And here is a group of orphans. O fathers and mothers, what do you think of these fatherless and motherless little ones? No hand at home to take care of their apparel, no heart to pity them. Said one little one, when the mother died: "Who will take care of my clothes now?" The little ones are thrown out in this great, cold world. They are shivering on the brink like lambs on the verge of a precipice. Does not your blood run cold as they go over it ?

And here is another group that come on toward the precipice. They are the children of besotted parents. They are worse off than orphans. Look at that pale cheek: woe bleached it. Look at that gash across the forehead; the father struck it. Hear that heart-piercing cry: a drunken mother's blasphemy compelled it. And we come out and we say: "O ye suffering, peeled and blistered ones, we come to help you." "Too late!" cry thousands of voices. "The path we travel is steep down, and we can't stop. Too late!" and we catch our breath and we make a terrific outcry. "Too late!" is echoed from the garret to the cellar, from the gin-shop and from the brothel. "Too late!" It *is* too late, and they go over.

Here is another group, an army of neglected children. They come on toward the brink, and every time they step ten thousand hearts break. The ground is red with the blood of their feet. The air is heavy with their groans. Their ranks are being filled up from all the houses of iniquity and shame. Skeleton Despair pushes them on toward the brink. The death-knell has already begun to toll, and the angels of God hover like birds over the plunge of a cataract. While these children are on the brink they halt, and throw out their hands, and cry: "Help! help!" O church of God, will you help? Men and women bought by the blood of the Son of God, will you help? while Christ cries from the heavens: "Save them from going down; I am the ransom."

I stopped the other day on the street and just looked at the face of one of those little ones. Have you ever examined the faces of the neglected children of the poor? Other children have gladness in their faces. When a group of them rush across the road, it seems as though a spring gust had unloosened an orchard of apple blossoms. But these children of the poor. There is but little ring in their laughter, and it stops quick, as though some bitter memory tripped it. They have an old walk. They do not skip or run up on the lumber just for the pleasure of leaping down. They never bathed in the mountain stream. They never waded in the brook for pebbles. They never chased the butterfly across the lawn, putting their hat right down where it was. Childhood has been dashed out of them. Want waved its wizard wand above the manger of their birth, and withered leaves are lying where God intended a budding giant of battle. Once in a while one of these children gets out. Here is one, for instance. At ten years of age he is sent out by his parents, who say to him: "Here is a basket—now go off and beg and steal." The boy says: "I can't steal." They kick him into a corner. That night he puts his swollen head into the straw; but a voice comes from heaven, saying, "Courage, poor boy, courage." Covering up his head from the bestiality, and stopping his ears from the cursing, he gets on up better and better. He washes his face clean at the public hydrant. With a few pennies got at running errands, he gets a better coat. Rough men, knowing that he comes from the Five Points, say: "Back with you, you little villain, to the place where you came from." But that night the boy says: "God help me, I can't go back;" and quicker than ever mother flew at the cry of a child's pain, the Lord responds from the heavens, "Courage, poor boy, courage." His bright face gets him a position. After a while he is second clerk. Years pass on, and he is first clerk. Years pass on. The glory of young manhood is on him. He comes into the firm. He goes on from one business success to another. He has achieved great fortune. He is the friend of the church of God, the friend of all good institutions, and one day he stands talking to the Board of Trade or to the Chamber of Commerce. People say: "Do you know who that is? Why, that is a merchant prince, and he was born in the Five Points." But God says in regard to him something better than that: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and had their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb." Oh, for some one to write the history of boy heroes and girl heroines who have triumphed over want and starvation and filth and rags. Yea, the record has already been made—made by the hand of God; and when these shall come at last with songs and rejoicing, it will take a very broad banner to hold the names of all the battle-fields on which they got the victory.

Some years ago, a roughly-clad, ragged boy came into my brother's office in New York, and said: "Mr. Talmage, lend me five dollars." My brother said: "Who are you?" The boy replied: "I am nobody. Lend me five dollars." "What do you want to do with five dollars?" "Well," the boy replied, "my mother is sick and poor, and I want to go into the newspaper business, and I shall get a home for her, and I will pay you back." My brother gave him the five dollars, of course never expecting to see it again; but he said: "When will you pay it?" The boy said: "I will pay it in six months, sir." Time went by, and one day a lad came into my brother's office, and said: "There's your five dollars." "What do you mean? What five dollars?" inquired my brother. "Don't you remember that a boy came in here six months ago and wanted to borrow five dollars to go into the newspaper business?" "Oh, yes, I remember. Are you the lad?" "Yes," he replied. "I have got along nicely. I have got a nice home for my mother (she is sick yet), and I am as well clothed as you are, and there's your five dollars." Oh, was he not worth saving? Why, that lad is worth fifty such boys as I have sometimes seen moving in elegant circles, never put to any use for God or man. Worth saving! I go farther than that, and tell you they are not only worth saving, but they are being saved. In one reform school, through which two thousand of these little ones passed, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-five turned out well. In other words, only five of the two thousand turned out badly. There are thousands of them who, through Christian societies, have been transplanted to beautiful homes all over this land, and there are many who, through the rich grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, have already won the crown. A little girl was found in the streets of Baltimore and taken into one of the reform societies, and they said to her, "What is your name?" She said, "My name is Mary." "What is your other name?" She said, "I don't know." So they took her into the reform society, and as they did not know her last name they always called her "Mary Lost," since she had been picked up out of the street. But she grew on, and after a while the Holy Spirit came to her heart, and she became a Christian child, and she changed her name; and when anybody asked her what her name was, she said, "It used to be Mary Lost; but now, since I have become a Christian, it is Mary Found."

For this vast multitude, are we willing to go forth from this morning's service and see what we can do, employing all the agencies I have spoken of for the rectification of the poisoned fountains? We live in a beautiful city. The lines have fallen to us in pleasant places, and we have a goodly heritage; and any man who does not like a residence in Brooklyn, must be a most uncomfortable and unreasonable man. But, my friends, the material prosperity of a city is not its chief glory. There may be fine houses and beautiful streets, and that all be the garniture of a sepulcher. Some of the most prosperous cities of the world have gone down, not one stone left upon another. But a city may be in ruins long before a tower has fallen, or a column has crumbled, or a tomb has been defaced. When in a city the churches of God are full of cold formalities and inanimate religion; when the houses of commerce are the abode of fraud and unholy traffic; when the streets are filled with crime unarrested and sin unenlightened and helplessness unpitied —that city is in ruins, though every church were a St. Peter's, and every moneyed institution were a Bank of England, and every library were a British Museum, and every house had a porch like that of Rheims and a roof like that of Amiens and a tower like that of Antwerp, and traceried windows like those of Freiburg.

My brethren, our pulses beat rapidly the time away, and soon we will be gone; and what we have to do for the city in which we live we must do right speedily, or never do it at all. In that day, when those who have wrapped themselves in luxuries and despised the poor, shall come to shame and everlasting contempt, I hope it may be said of you and me that we gave bread to the hungry, and wiped away the tear of the orphan, and upon the wanderer of the street we opened the brightness and benediction of a Christian home; and then, through our instrumentality, it shall be known on earth and in heaven, that Mary Lost became Mary Found!

"THESE WERE THE GREAT PRINTING HOUSES OF THE NEW YORK DAILIES."

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BATTLE FOR BREAD.

"And the ravens brought bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening."—1 Kings xvii: 6.

The ornithology of the Bible is a very interesting study. The stork which knoweth her appointed time. The common sparrows teaching the lesson of God's providence. The ostriches of the desert, by careless incubation illustrating the recklessness of parents who do not take enough pains with their children. The eagle symbolizing riches which take wings and fly away. The pelican, emblemizing solitude. The bat, a flake of the darkness. The night hawk, the ossifrage, the cuckoo, the lapwing, the osprey, by the command of God in Leviticus, flung out of the world's bill of fare. I would like to have been with Audubon as he went through the woods, with gun and pencil bringing down and sketching the fowls of heaven, his unfolded portfolio thrilling all Christendom. What wonderful creatures of God the birds are! Some of them this morning, like the songs of heaven let loose, bursting through the gates of heaven. Consider their feathers, which are clothing and conveyance at the same time; the nine vertebræ of the neck, the three eyelids to each eye, the third eyelid an extra curtain for graduating the light of the sun. Some of these birds scavengers and some of them orchestra. Thank God for quail's whistle, and lark's carol, and the twitter of the wren, called by the ancients the king of birds, because when the fowls of heaven went into a contest as to who could fly the highest, and the eagle swung nearest the sun, a wren on the back of the eagle, after the eagle was exhausted, sprang up much higher, and so was called by the ancients the king of birds. Consider those of them that have golden crowns and crests, showing them to be feathered imperials. And listen to the humming-bird's serenade in the ear of the honeysuckle. Look at the belted kingfisher, striking like a dart from sky to water. Listen to the voice of the owl, giving the key-note to all croakers. And behold the condor, among the Andes, battling with the reindeer. I do not know whether an aquarium or aviary is the best altar from which to worship God.

There is an incident in my text that baffles all the ornithological wonders of the world. The grain crop had been cut off. Famine was in the land. In a cave by the brook Cherith sat a minister of God, Elijah, waiting for something to eat. Why did he not go to the neighbors? There were no neighbors, it was a wilderness. Why did he not pick some of the berries? There were none. If there had been, they would have been dried up. Seated, one morning at the mouth of his cave, the prophet looks into the dry and pitiless heavens, and he sees a flock of birds approaching. Oh! if they were only partridges, or if he only had an arrow with which to bring them down. But as they come nearer he finds they are not comestible, but unclean, and the eating of them would be spiritual death. The strength of their beak, the length of their wings, the blackness of their color, their loud, harsh "cruck! cruck!" prove them to be ravens. They whirr around about the prophet's head, and then they come on fluttering wing and pause on the level of his lips, and one of the ravens brings bread, and another raven brings meat, and after they have discharged their tiny cargo they wheel past, and others come, until after a while the prophet has enough, and these black servants of the wilderness table are gone. For six months, and some say a whole year, morning and evening, the breakfast and supper bell sounded as these ravens rang out on the air their "cruck! cruck!" Guess where they got the food from. The old Rabbins say they got it from the kitchen of King Ahab. Others say that the ravens got the food from pious Obadiah, who was in the habit of feeding the persecuted. Some say that the ravens brought the food to their young in the trees, and that Elijah had only to climb up and get it. Some say that the whole story is improbable; for these were carnivorous birds, and the food they carried was the torn flesh of living beasts, and that ceremonially unclean, or it was carrion, and it would not have been fit for the prophet. Some say they were not ravens at all, but that the word translated "ravens" in my text ought to have been translated "Arabs;" so it would have read: "The Arabs brought bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening." Anything but admit the Bible to be true. Hew away at this miracle until all the miracle is gone. Go on with the depleting process; but know, my brother, that you are robbing only one man—and that is yourself—of one of the most comforting, beautiful, pathetic, and triumphant lessons in all the ages. I can tell you who these purveyors were: they were ravens. I can tell you who freighted them with provisions. God. I can tell you who launched them. God. I can tell you who taught them which way to fly. God. I can tell you who told them at what cave to swoop. God. I can tell you who introduced raven to prophet, and prophet to raven. God. There is one passage I will whisper in your ear, for I would not want to utter it aloud, lest some one should drop down under its power: "If any man shall take away from the words of the prophesy of this book, God shall take away his part out of the book of life and out of the holy city." While, then, this morning we watch the ravens feeding Elijah, let the swift dove of God's Spirit sweep down the sky with Divine food, and on outspread wing pause at the lip of every soul hungering for comfort.

If I should ask you where is the seat of war to-day, you would say on the Danube. No. That is comparatively a small conflict, even if all Europe should plunge into it. The great conflict to-day is on the Thames, on the Hudson, on the Mississippi, on the Rhine, on the Nile, on the Ganges, on the Hoang Ho. It is a battle that has been going on for six thousand years. The troops engaged in it are twelve hundred millions, and those who have fallen are vaster in numbers than those who march. It is a battle for bread. Sentimentalists sit in a cushioned chair, in their pictured study, with their slippered feet on a damask ottoman, and say that this world is a great scene of avarice and greed. It does not seem so to me. If it were not for the absolute necessities of the cases, nine-tenths of the stores, factories, shops, banking-houses, of the land would be closed to-morrow. Who is that man delving in the Black Hills? or toiling in a New England factory? or going through a roll of bills in the bank? or measuring a fabric on the counter? He is a champion sent forth in behalf of some home circle that has to be cared for—in behalf of some church of God that has to be supported—in behalf of some asylum of mercy that has to be sustained. Who is that woman bending over the sewing machine? or carrying the bundle? or sweeping the room? or mending the garment? or sweltering at the wash-tub? That is Deborah, one of the Lord's heroines, battling against Amalekitish want, which comes down with iron chariot to crush her and hers. The great question with the vast majority of people to-day is not whether President Hayes treated South Carolina and Louisiana as he ought—not whether the Turkish Sultan or the Russian Czar ought to be helped in this conflict—the great question with the vast majority of people is: "How shall I support my family? How shall I meet my notes? How shall I pay my rent? How shall I give food, clothing, and education to those who are dependent upon me?" Oh! if God would help me to-day to assist you in the solution of that problem, the happiest man in this house would be your preacher. I have gone out on a cold morning with expert sportsmen to hunt for pigeons; I have gone out on the meadows to hunt for quail; I have gone out on the marsh to hunt for reed birds; but this morning I am out for ravens.

Notice, in the first place, in the story of my text, that these winged caterers came to Elijah directly from God. "I have commanded the ravens that they feed thee," we find God saying in an adjoining passage. They did not come out of some other cave. They did not just happen to alight there. God freighted them, God launched them, and God told them by what cave to swoop. That is the same God that is going to supply you. He is your Father. You would have to make an elaborate calculation before you could tell me how many pounds of food and how many yards of clothing would be necessary for you and your family; but God knows without any calculation. You have a plate at his table, and you are going to be waited on, unless you act like a naughty child, and kick, and scramble, and pound saucily the plate, and try to upset things. God has a vast family, and everything is methodized, and you are going to be served, if you will only wait your turn. God has already ordered all the suits of clothes you will ever need down to the last suit in which you shall be laid out. God has already ordered all the food you will ever eat down to the last crumb that will be put in your mouth in the dying sacrament. It may not be just the kind of food or apparel we would prefer. The sensible parent depends on his own judgment as to what ought to be the apparel and the food of the minor in the family. The child would say: "Give me sugars and confections." "Oh! no," says the parent. "You must have something plainer first." The child would say: "Oh! give me these great blotches of color in the garment." "No," says the parent; "that wouldn't be suitable." Now, God is our Father, and we are minors, and he is going to clothe us and feed us, although he may not always yield to our infantile wish for sweets and glitter. These ravens of the text did not bring pomegranates from the glittering platter of King Ahab. They brought bread and meat. God had all the heavens and the earth before him and under him, and yet he sends this plain food because it was best for Elijah to have it! Oh! be strong, my hearer, in the fact that the same God is going to supply you. It is never "hard times" with him. His ships never break on the rocks. His banks never fail. He has the supply for you, and he has the means for sending it. He has not only the cargo, but the ship. If it were necessary he would swing out from the heavens a flock of ravens reaching from his gate to yours, until the food would be flung down the sky from beak to beak and from talon to talon.

Notice, again, in this story of the text, that the ravens did not allow Elijah to hoard up a surplus. They did not bring enough on Monday to last all the week. They did not bring enough one morning to last until the next morning. They came twice a day, and brought just enough for one time. You know as well as I that the great fret of the world is that we want a surplus—we want the ravens to bring enough for fifty years. You have more confidence in the Long Island Bank than you have in the royal bank of heaven. You say: "All that is very poetic, but you may have the black ravens—give me the gold eagles." We had better be content with just enough. If, in the morning, your family eat up all the food there is in the house, do not sit down, and cry, and say: "I don't know where the next meal is coming from." About five, or six, or seven o'clock in the evening just look up, and you will see two black spots on the sky, and you will hear the flapping of wings, and, instead of Edgar A. Poe's insane raven "alighting on the chamber-door, only this, and nothing more," you will find Elijah's two ravens, or the two ravens of the Lord, the one bringing bread and the other bringing meat—plumed butcher and baker.

God is infinite in resource. When the city of Rochelle was besieged, and the inhabitants were dying of the famine, the tides washed up on the beach as never before, and as never since, enough shell-fish to feed the whole city. God is good. There is no mistake about that. History tells us that, in 1555, in England, there was a great drought. The crops failed, but in Essex, on the rocks, in a place where they had neither sown nor cultured, a great crop of peas grew, until they filled a hundred measures; and there were blossoming vines enough promising as much more. But why go so far? I can give you a family incident. I will tell you a secret that has never been told. Some generations back there was a great drought in Connecticut, New England. The water disappeared from the hills and the farmers living on the hills drove their cattle down toward the valleys, and had them supplied at the wells and fountains of the neighbors. But these after awhile began to fail, and the neighbors said to Mr. Birdseye, of whom I shall speak: "You must not send your flocks and herds down here any more; our wells are giving out." Mr. Birdseye, the old Christian man, gathered his family at the altar, and with his family he gathered the slaves of the household—for bondage was then in vogue in Connecticut—and on their knees before God they cried for water; and the family story is, that there was weeping and great sobbing at that altar, that the family might not perish for lack of water, and that the herds and flocks might not perish. The family rose from the altar. Mr. Birdseye, the old man, took his staff and walked out over the hills, and in a place where he had been scores of times without noticing anything particular, he saw the ground was very dark, and he took his staff, and turned up the ground, and the water started; and he beckoned to his servants and they came, and they brought pails and buckets until all the family, and all the flocks and the herds, were cared for, and then they made troughs reaching from that place down to the house and barn, and the water flowed, and it is a living fountain to-day! Now, I call that old grandfather, Elijah, and I call that brook that began to roll then, and is rolling still, the brook Cherith; and the lesson to me, and to all who hear it, is, when you are in great stress of circumstances, pray and dig, dig and pray, and pray and dig. How does that passage go?—"The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my loving-kindness shall not fail." If your merchandise, if your mechanism, fail, look out for ravens. If you have, in your despondency, put God on trial, and condemned him as guilty of cruelty, I move, this morning for a new trial. If the biography of your life is ever written, I will tell you what the first chapter, and the middle chapter, and the last chapter will be about, if it is written accurately. The first about mercy, the middle chapter about mercy, the last chapter about mercy. The mercy that hovered over your cradle. The mercy that will hover over your grave. The mercy that will cover all between.

Again, this story of the text impresses me that relief came to this prophet with the most unexpected, and with seemingly impossible, conveyance. If it had been a robin red-breast, or a musical meadow-lark, or a meek turtle-dove, or a sublime albatross that had brought the food to Elijah, it would not have been so surprising. But no. It was a bird so fierce and inauspicate that we have fashioned one of our most forceful and repulsive words out of it—ravenous. That bird has a passion for picking out the eyes of men and animals. It loves to maul the sick and the dying. It swallows, with vulturous guggle, everything it can put its beak on; and yet all the food Elijah gets for six months or a year is from the ravens. So your supply is going to come from an unexpected source. You think some great-hearted, generous man will come along and give you his name on the back of your note, or he will go security for you in some great enterprise. No, he will not. God will open the heart of some Shylock toward you. Your relief will come from the most unexpected quarter. The Providence that seemed ominous will be to you more than that which seemed auspicious. It will not be a chaffinch with breast and wing dashed with white, and brown, and chestnut: it will be a black raven.

Here is where we all make our mistake, and that is in regard to the color of God's providence. A white providence comes to us, and we say: "O! it is mercy." Then a black providence comes toward us, and we say: "O! that is disaster." The white providence comes to you, and you have great business success, and you have fifty thousand dollars, and you get proud, and you get independent of God, and you begin to feel that the prayer "Give me this day my daily bread" is inappropriate for you, for you have made provision for a hundred years. Then a black providence comes, and it sweeps everything away, and then you begin to pray, and you begin to feel your dependence, and begin to be humble before God, and you cry out for treasures in heaven. The black providence brought you salvation. The white providence brought you ruin. That which seemed to be harsh, and fierce, and dissonant, was your greatest mercy. It was a raven.

There was a child born in your house. All your friends congratulated you. The other children of the family and of the neighborhood stood amazed looking at the new-comer, and asked a great many questions, genealogical and chronological. You said—and you said truthfully—that a white angel flew through the room and left the little one there. That little one stood with its two feet in the very center of your sanctuary of affection, and with its two hands it took hold of the altar of your soul. But one day there came one of the three scourges of children—scarlet fever, or croup, or diphtheria—and all that bright scene vanished. The chattering, the strange questions, the pulling at the dresses as you crossed the floor—all ceased. As the great friend of children stooped down and leaned toward that cradle, and took the little one in His arms, and walked away with it into the bower of eternal summer, your eye began to follow Him, and you followed the treasure He carried, and you have been following them ever since; and, instead of thinking of heaven only once a week, as formerly, you are thinking of it all the time, and you are more pure and tender-hearted than you used to be, and you are patiently waiting for the day-break. It is not self-righteousness in you to acknowledge that you are a better man than you used to be—you are a better woman than you used to be. What was it that brought you the sanctifying blessing? O! it was the dark shadow on the nursery; it was the dark shadow on the short grave; it was the dark shadow on your broken heart; it was the brooding of a great black trouble; it was a raven—it was a raven. Dear Lord, teach this people that white providences do not always mean advancement, and that black providences do not always mean retrogression.

Children of God, get up out of your despondency. The Lord never had so many ravens as he has this morning. Fling your fret and worry to the winds. Sometimes, under the vexations of life, you feel like my little girl of four years last week, who said, under some childish vexations: "Oh, I wish I could go to heaven, and see God, and pick flowers!" He will let you go when the right time comes to pick flowers. Until then, whatever you want, pray for. I suppose Elijah prayed pretty much all the time. Tremendous work behind him. Tremendous work before him. God has no spare ravens for idlers, or for people who are prayerless. I put it in the boldest shape possible, and I am willing to risk my eternity on it: ask God in the right way for what you want, and you shall have it, if it is best for you. Mrs. Jane Pithey, of

Chicago, a well-known Christian woman, was left by her husband a widow with one half dollar and a cottage. She was palsied, and had a mother, ninety years of age, to support. The widowed soul every day asked God for all that was needed in the household, and the servant even was astonished at the precision with which God answered the prayers of that woman item by item, item by item. One day, rising from the family altar, the servant said: "You have not asked for coal, and the coal is out." Then they stood and prayed for the coal. One hour after that, the servant threw open the door and said: "The coal has come." A generous man, whose name I could give you, had sent—as never before and never since—a supply of coal. You cannot understand it. I do. Ravens! Ravens!

My friend, you have a right to argue from precedent that God is going to take care of you. Has he not done it two or three times every day? That is most marvelous. I look back and I wonder that God has given me food three times a day regularly all my life-time, never missing but once, and then I was lost in the mountains; but that very morning and that very night I met the ravens.

O! the Lord is so good that I wish all this people would trust Him with the two lives—the life you are now living and that which every tick of the watch and every stroke of the clock informs you is approaching. Bread for your immortal soul comes to-day. See! They alight on the platform. They alight on the backs of all the pews. They swing among the arches. Ravens! Ravens! "Blessed are they that hunger after righteousness, for they shall be filled." To all the sinning, and the sorrowing, and the tempted deliverance comes this hour. Look down, and you see nothing but spiritual deformities. Look back, and you see nothing but wasted opportunity. Cast your eye forward, and you have a fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversary. But look up, and you behold the whipped shoulders of an interceding Christ, and the face of a pardoning God, and the irradiation of an opening heaven. I hear the whir of their wings. Do you not feel the rush of the air on your cheek? Ravens! Ravens!

There is only one question I want to ask: how many of this audience are willing to trust God for the supply of their bodies, and trust the Lord Jesus Christ for the redemption of their immortal souls? Amid the clatter of the hoofs and the clang of the wheels of the judgment chariot, the whole matter will be demonstrated.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE HORNET'S MISSION.

"And the Lord will send the hornet."—Deut. vii: 20.

It seems as if the insect world were determined to war against the human race. It is attacking the grainfields and the orchards and the vineyards. The Colorado beetle, the Nebraska grasshopper, the New Jersey locust, the universal potato destroyer, seem to carry on the work which was begun ages ago when the insects buzzed out of Noah's ark as the door was opened.

In my text the hornet flies out on its mission. It is a species of wasp, swift in its motion and violent in its sting. Its touch is torture to man or beast. We have all seen the cattle run bellowing from the cut of its lancet. In boyhood we used to stand cautiously looking at the globular nest hung from the tree branch, and while we were looking at the wonderful pasteboard covering we were struck with something that sent us shrieking away. The hornet goes in swarms. It has captains over hundreds, and twenty of them attacking one man will produce certain death. The Persians attempted to conquer a Christian city, but the elephants and the beasts on which the Persians rode were assaulted by the hornet, so that the whole army was broken up and the besieged city was rescued. This burning and noxious insect stung out the Hittites and the Canaanites from their country. What the gleaming sword and chariot of war could not accomplish was done by the puncture of an insect. The Lord sent the hornet.

My friends, when we are assaulted by behemoths of trouble—great behemoths of trouble—we become chivalric, and we assault them; we get on the high-mettled steed of our courage, and we make a cavalry charge at them, and, if God be with us, we come out stronger and better than when we went in. But, alas! for these insectile annoyances of life—these foes too small to shoot—these things without any avoirdupois weight—the gnats, and the midges, and the flies, and the wasps, and the hornets. In other words, it is the small stinging annoyances of our life which drive us out and use us up. Into the best conditioned life, for some grand and glorious purpose, God sends the hornet.

I remark in the first place that these small stinging annoyances may come in the shape of a sensitive nervous organization. People who are prostrated under typhoid fevers or with broken bones get plenty of sympathy, but who pities anybody that is nervous? The doctors say, and the family says, and everybody says, "Oh! she 's only a little nervous; that 's all." The sound of a heavy foot, the harsh clearing of a throat, a discord in music, a want of harmony between the shawl and the glove on the same person, a curt answer, a passing slight, the wind from the east, any one of ten thousand annoyances, opens the door for the hornet. The fact is, that the vast majority of the people in this country are overworked, and their nerves are the first to give up. A great multitude are under the strain of Leyden, who, when he was told by his physician that if he did not stop working while he was in such poor physical health he would die, responded, "Doctor, whether I live or die the wheel must keep going around." These persons of whom

I speak have a bleeding sensitiveness. The flies love to light on anything raw, and these people are like the Canaanites spoken of in the text or in the context—they have a very thin covering and are vulnerable at all points. "And the Lord sent the hornet."

Again, these small insect annoyances may come to us in the shape of friends and acquaintances who are always saying disagreeable things. There are some people you cannot be with for half an hour but you feel cheered and comforted. Then there are other people you cannot be with for five minutes before you feel miserable. They do not mean to disturb you, but they sting you to the bone. They gather up all the yarn which the gossips spin, and peddle it. They gather up all the adverse criticisms about your person, about your business, about your home, about your church, and they make your ear the funnel into which they pour it. They laugh heartily when they tell you, as though it were a good joke, and you laugh too—outside. These people are brought to our attention in the Bible, in the Book of Ruth: Naomi went forth beautiful and with the finest of worldly prospects into another land, but after awhile she came back widowed, and sick, and poor. What did her friends do when she came back to the city? They all went out, and, instead of giving her common-sense consolation, what did they do? Read the book of Ruth and find out. They threw up their hands and said, "Is this Naomi?" as much as to say "How very bad you look!" When I entered the ministry I looked very pale for years, and every year, for four or five years, a hundred times a year, I was asked if I was not in a consumption! And passing through the room I would sometimes hear people sigh and say, "A-ah! not long for this world!" I resolved in those times that I never, in any conversation, would say anything depressing, and by the help of God I have kept the resolution. These people of whom I speak reap and bind in the great harvest-field of discouragement. Some days you greet them with a hilarious "Good morning," and they come buzzing at you with some depressing information. "The Lord sent the hornet." It is astonishing how some people prefer to write and to say disagreeable things. That was the case when four or five years ago Henry M. Stanley returned after his magnificent exploit of finding Doctor David Livingstone, and when Mr. Stanley stood before the *savans* of Europe, and many of the small critics of the day, under pretence of getting geographical information, put to him most insolent questions, he folded his arms and refused to answer. At the very time when you would suppose all decent men would have applauded the heroism of the man, there were those to hiss. "The Lord sent the hornet." And now at this time, when that man sits down on the western coast of Africa, sick and worn perhaps in the grandest achievement of the age in the way of geographical discovery, there are small critics all over the world to buzz and buzz, and caricature and deride him, and after a while he will get the London papers, and, as he opens them, out will fly the hornet. When I see that there are so many people in the world who like to say disagreeable things, and write disagreeable things, I come almost in my weaker moments to believe what a man said to me in Philadelphia one Monday morning. I went to get the horse that was at the livery, and the hostler, a plain man, said to me: "Mr. Talmage, I saw that you preached to the young men yesterday." I said, "Yes." He said, "No use, no use; man's a failure."

The small insect annoyances of life sometimes come in the shape of a local physical trouble, which does not amount to a positive prostration, but which bothers you when you want to feel the best. Perhaps it is a sick headache which has been the plague of your life, and you appoint some occasion of mirth, or sociality, or usefulness, and when the clock strikes the hour you cannot make your appearance. Perhaps the trouble is between the ear and the forehead, in the shape of a neuralgic twinge. Nobody can see it or sympathize with you; but just at the time when you want your intellect clearest, and your disposition brightest, you feel a sharp, keen, disconcerting thrust. "The Lord sent the hornet."

Perhaps these small insect annoyances will come in the shape of a domestic irritation. The parlor and the kitchen do not always harmonize. To get good service and to keep it is one of the great questions of the country. Sometimes it may be the arrogancy and inconsiderateness of employers; but whatever be the fact, we all admit there are these insect annoyances winging their way out from the culinary department. If the grace of God be not in the heart of the housekeeper, she cannot maintain her equilibrium. The men come home at night and hear the story of these annoyances, and say: "Oh! these home troubles are very little things." They are small, small as wasps, but they sting. Martha's nerves were all unstrung when she rushed in asking Christ to reprove Mary, and there are tens of thousands of women who are dying, stung to death by these pestiferous domestic annoyances. "The Lord sent the hornet."

These small insect disturbances may also come in the shape of business irritations. There are men here who went through 1857 and Sept. 24, 1869, without losing their balance, who are every day unhorsed by little annoyances—a clerk's ill-manners, or a blot of ink on a bill of lading, or the extravagance of a partner who overdraws his account, or the underselling by a business rival, or the whispering of business confidences in the street, or the making of some little bad debt which was against your judgment, just to please somebody else. It is not the panics that kill the merchants. Panics come only once in ten or twenty years. It is the constant din of these every-day annoyances which is sending so many of our best merchants into nervous dyspepsia and paralysis and the grave. When our national commerce fell flat on its face, these men stood up and felt almost defiant; but their life is giving way now under the swarm of these pestiferous annoyances. "The Lord sent the hornet."

I have noticed in the history of some of my congregation that their annoyances are multiplying, and that they have a hundred there they used to have ten. The naturalist tells us that a wasp sometimes has a family of twenty thousand wasps, and it does seem as if every annoyance of your life bred a million. By the help of God to-day I want to show you the other side. The hornet is of no use? Oh, yes! The naturalists tell us they are very important in the world's economy; they kill spiders and they clear the atmosphere; and I really believe God sends the annoyances of our life upon us to kill the spiders of the soul and to clear the atmosphere of our skies. These annoyances are sent on us, I think, to wake us up from our lethargy. There is nothing that makes a man so lively as a nest of "yellow jackets," and I think that these annoyances are intended to persuade us of the fact that this is not a world for us to stop in. If we had a bed of everything that was attractive and soft and easy, what would we want of heaven? You think that the hollow tree sends the hornet, or you think the devil sends the hornet. I want to correct your opinion. "The Lord sent the hornet."

Then I also think these annoyances come upon us to culture our patience. In the gymnasium you find upright parallel bars—bars with holes over each other for pegs to be put in. Then the gymnast takes a peg in each hand and he begins to climb, one inch at a time, or two inches, and getting his strength cultured, reaches after a while the ceiling. And it seems to me that these annoyances in life are a moral gymnasium, each worry a peg by which we are to climb higher and higher in Christian attainment. We all love to see patience, but it cannot be cultured in fair weather. It is a child of the storm. If you had everything desirable and there was nothing more to get, what would you want with patience? The only time to culture it is when you are slandered and cheated, and sick and half dead. "Oh," you say, "if I only had the circumstances of some well-to-do man I would be patient too." You might as well say, "If it were not for this water I would swim;" or, "I could shoot this gun if it were not for the caps." When you stand chin-deep in annoyances is the time for you to swim out toward the great headlands of Christian attainment, and when your life is loaded to the muzzle with repulsive annoyances—that is the time to draw the trigger. Nothing but the furnace will ever burn out of us the clinker and the slag. I have formed this theory in regard to small annoyances and vexations: It takes just so much trouble to fit us for usefulness and for heaven. The only question is, whether we shall take it in the bulk, or pulverized and granulated. Here is one man who takes it in the bulk. His back is broken, or his eyesight put out, or some other awful calamity befalls him; while the vast majority of people take the thing piecemeal. Which way would you rather have it? Of course in piecemeal. Better have five aching teeth than one broken jaw. Better ten fly-blisters than an amputation. Better twenty squalls than one cyclone. There may be a difference of opinion as to allopathy and homœpathy; but in this matter of trouble I like homœopathic doses—small pellets of annoyance rather than some knock-down dose of calamity. Instead of the thunderbolt give us the hornet. If you have a bank you would a great deal rather that fifty men should come in with cheques less than a hundred dollars than to have two depositors come in the same day each wanting his ten thousand dollars. In this latter case, you cough and look down at the floor and up at the ceiling before you look into the safe. Now, my friends, would you not rather have these small drafts of annoyance on your bank of faith than some all-staggering demand upon your endurance? I want to make you strong, that you will not surrender to small annoyances. In the village of Hamelin, tradition says, there was an invasion of rats, and these small creatures almost devoured the town and threatened the lives of the population, and the story is that a piper came out one day and played a very sweet tune, and all the vermin followed him—followed him to the banks of the Weser and then he blew a blast and they dropped in and disappeared forever. Of course this is a fable, but I wish I could, on the sweet flute of the Gospel, draw forth all the nibbling and burrowing annoyances of your life, and play them down into the depths forever. How many touches did the artist give to his picture of "Cotopaxi," or his "Heart of the Andes?" I suppose about fifty thousand touches. I hear the canvas saying, "Why do you keep me trembling with that pencil so long? Why don't you put it on in one dash?" "No," says the artist, "I know how to make a painting; it will take fifty thousand of these touches." And I want you, my friends, to understand that it is these ten thousand annoyances which, under God, are making up the picture of your life, to be hung at last in the galleries of heaven, fit for angels to look at. God knows how to make a picture.

If I had my way with you I would have you possess all possible worldly prosperity. I would have you each one a garden—a river running through it, geraniums and shrubs on the sides, and the grass and flowers as beautiful as though the rainbow had fallen. I would have you a house, a splendid mansion, and the bed should be covered with upholstery dipped in the setting sun. I would have every hall in your house set with statues and statuettes, and then I would have the four quarters of the globe pour in all their luxuries on your table, and you should have forks of silver and knives of gold, inlaid with diamonds and amethysts. Then you should each one of you have the finest horses, and your pick of the equipages of the world. Then I would have you live a hundred and fifty years, and you should not have a pain or ache until the last breath. "Not each one of us?" you say. Yes, each one of you. "Not to your enemies?" Yes; the only difference I would make with them would be that I would put a little extra gilt on their walls and a little extra embroidery on their slippers. But you say, "Why does not God give us all these things?" Ah! I bethink myself. He is wiser. It would make fools and sluggards of us if we had our way. No man puts his best picture in the portico or vestibule of his house. God meant this world to be only the vestibule of heaven, that great gallery of the universe toward which we are aspiring. We must not have it too good in this world, or we would want no heaven. You are surprised that aged people are so willing to go out of this world. I will tell you the reason. It is not only because of the bright prospects in heaven, but it is because they feel that seventy years of annoyance is enough. They would have lain down in the soft meadows of this world forever, but "God sent the hornet."

My friends, I shall not have preached in vain if I have shown you that the annoyances of life, the small annoyances, may be subservient to your present and eternal advantage. Polycarp was condemned to be burned at the stake. The stake was planted. He was fastened to it, the faggots were placed round about the stake, they were kindled, but, by some strange current of the atmosphere, history tells us, the flames bent outward like the sails of a ship under a strong breeze, and then far above they came together, making a canopy; so that instead of being destroyed by the flames, there he stood in a flamboyant bower planted by his persecutors. They had to take his life in another way, by the point of the poinard. And I have to tell you this morning that God can make all the flames of your trial a wall of defense and a canopy for the soul. God is just as willing to fulfill to you as he was to Polycarp the promise, "When thou passest through the fire thou shalt not be burned." In heaven you will acknowledge the fact that you never had one annoyance too many, and through all eternity you will be grateful that in this world the Lord did send the hornet. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "All things work together for good to those who love God." The Lord sent the sunshine. "The Lord sent the hornet."

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE OUTSIDE SHEEP.

Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.—John x: 16.

There is no monopoly in religion. The grace of God is not a little property that we may fence off and have all to ourselves. It is not a king's park at which we look through a barred gate-way, wishing that we might go in and see the deer and the statuary, and pluck the flowers and fruits in the royal conservatory. No, it is the Father's orchard, and everywhere there are bars that we may let down and gates that we may swing open.

In my boyhood, next to the country school-house, there was an orchard of apples, owned by a very lame man, who, although there were apples in the place perpetually decaying, and by scores and scores of bushels, never would allow any of us to touch the fruit. One day, in the sinfulness of a nature inherited from our first parents, who were ruined by the same temptation, some of us invaded that orchard; but soon retreated, for the man came after us at a speed reckless of making his lameness worse, and cried out: "Boys, drop those apples, or I'll set the dog on you!"

Well, my friends, there are Christian men who have the Church under severe guard. There is fruit in this orchard for the whole world; but they have a rough and unsympathetic way of accosting outsiders, as though they had no business here, though the Lord wants them all to come and take the largest and the ripest fruit on the premises. Have you an idea that because you were baptized at thirteen months of age, and because you have all your life been under hallowed influences, that therefore you have a right to one whole side of the Lord's table, spreading yourself out and taking up the entire room? I tell you no. You will have to haul in your elbows, for I shall to-night place on either side of you those whom you never expected would sit there; for, as Christ said to the Jews long ago, so he says to you and to me to-night: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

MacDonald, the Scotchman, has four or five dozen head of sheep. Some of them are browsing on the heather, some of them are lying down under the trees, some of them are in his yard; they are scattered around in eight or ten different places. Cameron, his neighbor, comes over and says: "I see you have thirty sheep; I have just counted them." "No," says MacDonald, "I have a great many more sheep than that. Some are here, and some are elsewhere. They are scattered all around about. I have four or five thousand in my flocks. Other sheep I have, which are not in *this* fold.'"

So Christ says to us. Here is a knot of Christians and there is a knot of Christians, but they make up a small part of the flock. Here is the Episcopal fold, the Methodist fold, the Lutheran fold, the Congregational fold, the Presbyterian fold, the Baptist and the Pedo-Baptist fold, the only difference between these last two being the mode of sheep-washing; and so they are scattered all over; and we come with our statistics, and say there are so many thousand of the Lord's sheep; but Christ responds: "No, no; you have not seen more than one out of a thousand of my flock. They are scattered all over the earth. 'Other sheep I have which are not of this fold.'"

Christ, in my text, was prophesying the conversion of the Gentiles with as much confidence as though they were already converted, and he is, to-night, in the words of my text, prophesying the coming of a great multitude of outsiders that you never supposed would come in, saying to you and saying to me: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

In the first place, I remark, that the heavenly Shepherd will find many of his sheep *amid the non-churchgoers.* There are congregations where they are all Christians, and they seem to be completely finished, and they remind one of the skeleton-leaves which, by chemical preparation, have had all the greenness and verdure taken off of them, and are left cold, and white, and delicate, nothing wanting but a glass case to put over them. The minister of Christ has nothing to do with such Christians but to come once a week, and with ostrich feather dust off the accumulation of the last six days, leaving them bright and crystalline as before. But the other kind of a Church is an armory, with perpetual sound of drum and fife, gathering recruits for the Lord of hosts. We say to every applicant: "Do you want to be on God's side, the safe side and the happy side? If so, come in the armory and get equipped. Here is a bath in which to be cleansed. Here are sandals to put upon your feet. Here is a helmet for your brow. Here is a breast-plate for your heart. Here is a sword for your right arm, and yonder is the battle-field. Quit yourselves like men!"

There are some here to-night, who say: "I stopped going to church ten or twenty years ago." My brother, is it not strange that you should be the first man I should talk to to-night? I know all your case; I know it very well. You have not been accustomed to come into the house of God, but I have a surprising announcement to make to you: you are going to become one of the Lord's sheep. "Ah," you say, "it is impossible. You don't know how far I am from anything of that kind." I know all about it. I have wandered up and down the world, and I understand your case. I have a still more startling announcement to make in regard to you: you are not only going to become one of the Lord's sheep, but you will become one to-night. You will stay after this service to be talked with about your soul. People of God, pray for that man! That is the only use for you to-night. I shall not break off so much as a crumb for you, Christians, in this sermon, for I am going to give it all to the outsiders. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

When the *Atlantic* went to pieces on Mars' Rock, and the people clambered up on the beach, why did not that heroic minister of the Gospel, of whom we have all read, sit down and take care of those men on the beach, wrapping them in flannels, kindling fire for them, seeing that they got plenty of food? Ah, he knew that there were others who would do that. He says: "Yonder are men and women freezing in the rigging of that wreck. Boys, launch the boat!" And now I see the oar-blades bend under the strong pull; but before they reached the rigging a woman was frozen and dead. She was washed off, poor thing! But he says: "There is a man to save;" and he cries out: "Hold on five minutes longer, and I will save you. Steady! Steady! Give me your hand. Leap into the life-boat. Thank God, he is saved!" So there are those here to-night who are safe on the shore of God's mercy. I will not spend any time with them at all; but I see there are some who are freezing in the rigging of sin, and surrounded by perilous storms. Pull away, my lads! Let us reach them! Alas! one is washed off and gone. There is one more to be saved. Let us push out for that one. Clutch the rope. Oh! dying man, clutch it as with a death-grip. Steady, now, on the slippery places. Steady. There! Saved! Saved! Just as I thought. For Christ has declared that there are some still in the breakers who shall come ashore. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

Christ commands his ministers to be fishermen; and when I go fishing I do not want to go among other churches, but into the wide world; not sitting along Hohokus Creek, where eight or ten other persons are sitting with hook and line, but, like the fishermen of Newfoundland, sailing off and dropping net away outside, forty or fifty miles from shore. Yes, there are non-church-goers here who will come in. Next Sabbath morning and evening they will be here again, or in some better church. They are this moment being swept into Christian associations. Their voice will be heard in public prayer. They will die in peace, their bed surrounded by Christian sympathies, and be carried out by devout men to be buried, and on their grave be chiseled the words: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." And on Resurrection day you will get up with the dear children you have already buried and with your Christian parents who have already won the palm. And all that grand and glorious history begins to-night. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

I remark again, the Heavenly Shepherd is going to find a great many of his sheep among *those who are positive rejectors of Christianity*. I do not know how you came to reject Christianity. It may have been through hearing Theodore Parker preach, or through reading Renan's "Life of Jesus," or through the infidel talk of some young man in your store. It may have been through the trickery of some professed Christian man who disgusted you with religion. I do not ask you how you became so; but you frankly tell me to-night that you do reject it. You do not believe that Christ is a Divine being, although you admit that he was a very good man. You do not believe that the Bible was inspired of God, although you think that there are some very fine things in it. You believe that the Scriptural description of Eden was only an allegory. There are fifty things that I believe that you do not believe And yet you are an accommodating man. Everybody that knows you says that of you. If I should ask you to do a kindness for me, or if any one else should ask of you a kindness, you would do it. Now, I have a kindness to ask of you to-night. It is something that will cost you nothing and will give me great delight. I want you by experiment to try the power of Christ's religion. If I should come to you, and you were very sick, and doctors had given you up, and said there was no chance for you, and I should take out a bottle, and say: "Here is a medicine that will cure you; it has cured fifty people, and it will cure you." You would say: "I have no confidence in it." I would say: "Won't you take it to oblige me?" "Well," you would say, "If it's any accommodation to you, I'll take it." My friend, will you be just as accommodating in matters of religion? There are some of you who have found out that this world cannot satisfy your soul. You are like the man who told me last Sabbath night, after the service was over, "I have tried this world and found it an insufficient portion. Tell me of something better." You have come to that. You are sick for the need of Divine medicament. Now, I come and tell you of a Physician who will cure you, who has cured hundreds and hundreds who were sick as you are. "Oh," you say, "I have no confidence in him." But will you not try him? Accommodate me in this matter; oblige me in this matter; just try him. I am very certain he will cure you. You reply: "I have no especial confidence in him; but if you ask me as a matter of accommodation, introduce him." So I do introduce him —Christ, the Physician, who has cured more blind eyes, and healed more ghastly wounds, and bound up more broken hearts, than all the doctors since the time of Æsculapius. That Divine Physician is here. Are you not ready to try him? Will you not, as a pure matter of experiment, try him, and state your case before him to-night? Hold nothing back from him. If you cannot pray, if you do not know how to pray any other way, say "O Lord Jesus Christ, this is a strange thing for me to do. I know nothing about the formulas of religion. These Christian people have been talking so long about what thou canst do for me. I am ready to do whatever thou commandest me to do. I am ready to take whatever thou commandest me to take. If there be any power in religion, as these people say, let me have the advantage of it." Will you try that experiment to-night? I do not at this point of my discourse say that there is anything in religion; but I simply say, try it—try it. Do not take my counsel or the counsel of any clergyman, if you despise clergymen. Perhaps we may be talking professionally; perhaps we may be prejudiced in the matter; perhaps we may be hypocritical in our utterances; perhaps we may preach because we are paid to preach; perhaps our advice is not worth taking. Then take the counsel of some very respectable laymen, as John Milton, the poet; as William Wilberforce, the statesman; as Isaac Newton, the astronomer; as Robert Boyle, the philosopher; as Locke, the metaphysician. They never preached or pretended to preach; and yet putting down, one his telescope, and another his parliamentary scroll, and another his electrician's wire, they all declare the adaptedness of Christ's religion to the wants and troubles of the world. If you will not take the recommendation of ministers of the Gospel, then take the recommendations of highly respectable laymen. Oh men, sceptical and struck through with unrest, would you not like to have some of the peace which broods over our souls to-night? I know all about your doubts. I have been through them all. I have gone through all the curriculum. I have doubted whether there is a God, whether Christ is God. I have doubted whether the Bible was true, I have doubted the immortality of the soul, I have doubted my own existence, I have doubted everything; and yet, out of that hot desert of doubt I have come into the broad, luxuriant, sunshiny land of Gospel hope, and peace, and comfort; and so I have confidence in preaching to you and asking you to come in. However often you may have spoken against the Bible, or however much you may have caricatured religion, step ashore from that rocking and tumultuous sea. If you go home to-night adhering to your infidelities, you will not sleep one wink. You do not want your children to come up with your skepticism. You cannot afford to die in that midnight darkness, can you? If you do not believe in anything else, you believe in love—a father's love, a mother's love, a wife's love, a child's love. Then let me tell you that God loves you more than them all. Oh, you must come in. You will come in. The great heart of Christ aches to have you come in, and Jesus this very moment—whether you sit or stand—looks into your eyes and says: "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

Again I remark, that the Heavenly Shepherd is going to find a great many sheep among *those who have been flung of evil habit.* It makes me mad to see Christian people give up a prodigal as lost. There are those who talk as though the grace of God were a chain of forty or fifty links, and after they had run out, there was nothing to touch the depth of a very bad case. If they were hunting and got off the track of the deer, they would look longer among the brakes and bushes for the lost game than they have been looking for that lost soul. People tell us that if a man has *delirium tremens* twice, he cannot be reclaimed; that after a woman has fallen from her integrity, she cannot be restored. The Bible has distinctly intimated that the Lord Almighty is ready to pardon four hundred and ninety times; that is, seventy times seven. There are men before the throne of God who have wallowed in every kind of sin; but, saved by the grace of Jesus, and washed in his blood, they stand there radiant now. There are those who plunged into the very lowest hell of Elm-street, New York, who have for the tenth time been lifted up, and finally, by the grace of God, they stand in heaven gloriously rescued by the grace promised to the chief of sinners. I want to tell you that God loves to take hold of a very bad case. When the Church casts you off, and when the club-room casts you off, and when society casts you off, and when business associates cast you off, and when father casts you off, and when mother casts you off, and when everybody casts you off, your first cry for help will bend the Eternal God clear down into the ditch of your suffering and shame. The Good Templars cannot save you, although they are a grand institution. The Sons of Temperance cannot save you, although they are mighty for good. Signing the temperance pledge cannot save you, although I believe in it. Nothing but the grace of the Eternal God can save you, and that will if you will throw yourself on it. There is a man in this house to-night who said to me during the week: "Unless God helps me I cannot be delivered. I have tried everything, sir; but now I have got in the habit of prayer, and when I come to a drinking saloon I pray that God will take me safe past, and I pray until I am past. He does help me." For every man given to strong drink there are scores of traps set; and when he goes out on business to-morrow, with his bill of goods, on Broadway, or John-street, or Walter-street, or Fulton-avenue, or Atlantic-avenue, he will be in infinite peril, and no one but the everywhere present God can see that man through. Oh! they talk about the catacombs of Naples, and the catacombs of Rome, and the catacombs of Egypt—the burial places under the city where the dust of a great multitude lie; but I tell you Brooklyn has its catacombs, and New York its catacombs, and Boston its catacombs, and Philadelphia its catacombs. They are the underground restaurants, full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Young man, you know it. God help you. There is no need of going into the art gallery to see in skillful sculpture that wonderful representation of a man and his sons wound around with serpents. There are families represented in this house to-night that are wrapped in the martyrdom of fang and scale and venom —a living Laocoon of ghastliness and horror. What are you to do? I am not speaking into the air. I am talking to-night to hundreds of men who must be saved by Christ's Gospel, or never saved at all. What are you going to do? Do not put your trust in bromide of potassium, or in Jamaica ginger, or anything that apothecaries can mix. Put your trust only in the Eternal God, and he will see you through. Some of you do not have temptations every day. It is a periodic temptation that comes every six weeks, or every three months, when it seems as if the powers of darkness kindle around about your tongue the fires of the pit. It is well enough, at such a time, as some of you do, to seek medical counsel; but your first and most importunate cry must be to God. If the fiends will drag you to the slaughter, make them do it on your knees. O God! now that the paroxysm of thirst is coming again upon that man, help him! Fling back into the pit of hell the fiend that assaults his soul this moment. Oh! my heart aches to see men go on in this fearful struggle without Christ.

There are to-night in this house those whose hands so tremble from dissipation that they can hardly hold a book; and yet I have to tell you that they will yet preach the Gospel, and on communion days carry around the consecrated bread, acceptable to everybody, because of their holy life, and their consecrated behavior. The Lord is going to save you. Your home has got to be rebuilt. Your physical health has got to be restored. Your worldly business has got to be reconstructed. The Church of God is going to rejoice over your discipleship. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

While I have hope for all prodigals, there are some people in this house to-night whom I give up as lost. I mean those who have been church-goers all their life, who have maintained outward morality, but who, notwithstanding twenty, thirty, forty years of Christian advantages, have never yielded their heart to Christ.

They are Gospel hardened. I could call their names now, and if they would rise up they would rise up in scores. Gospel hardened! A sermon has no more effect upon them than the shining of the moon on the city pavement. As Christ says: "The publicans and harlots will go into the kingdom of God before them." They have resisted all the importunity of Divine mercy, and have gone, during these thirty years, through most powerful earthquakes of religious feeling, and they are farther away from God than ever. After awhile they will lie down sick, and some day it will be told that they are dead. No hope!

But I turn to outsiders with a hope that thrills through my body and soul. "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold." You are not Gospel hardened. You have not heard or read many sermons during the last few years. As you came in to-night everything was novel, and all the services are suggestive of your early days. How sweet the opening hymn sounded in your ears, and how blessed it is in this place! Everything suggestive of heaven. You do not weep, but the shower is not far off. You sigh, and you have noticed that there is always a sigh in the wind before the rain falls. There are those here who would give anything if they could find relief in tears. They say: "Oh, my wasted life! Oh, the bitter past! Oh, the graves over which I have stumbled! Whither shall I fly? Alas for the future! Everything is dark—so dark, so dark. God help me! God pity me!" Thank the Lord for that last utterance. You have begun to pray, and when a man begins to petition, that sets all heaven flying this way, and God steps in and beats back the hounds of temptation to their kennel, and around about the poor wounded soul puts the covert of his pardoning mercy. Hark! I hear something fall.

What was that? It is the bars of the fence around the sheep-fold. The shepherd lets them down, and the hunted sheep of the mountain bound in; some of them their fleece torn with the brambles, some of them their feet lame with the dogs; but bounding in. Thank God! "Other sheep I have which are not of this fold."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE ACIDS OF THIS LIFE.

When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar.—John xix: 30.

The brigands of Jerusalem had done their work. It was almost sundown, and Jesus was dying. Persons in crucifixion often lingered on from day to day—crying, begging, and cursing; but Christ had been exhausted by years of maltreatment. Pillowless, poorly fed, flogged—as bent over and tied to a low post, his bare back was inflamed with the scourges intersticed with pieces of lead and bone—and now for whole hours, the weight of his body hung on delicate tendons, and, according to custom, a violent stroke under the armpits had been given by the executioner. Dizzy, swooning, nauseated, feverish—a world of agony is compressed in the two words: "I thirst!" O skies of Judea, let a drop of rain strike on his burning tongue! O world, with rolling rivers, and sparkling lakes, and spraying fountains, give Jesus something to drink! If there be any pity in earth, or heaven, or hell, let it now be demonstrated in behalf of this royal sufferer. The wealthy women of Jerusalem used to have a fund of money with which they provided wine for those people who died in crucifixion—a powerful opiate to deaden the pain; but Christ would not take it. He wanted to die sober, and so he refused the wine. But afterward they go to a cup of vinegar, and soak a sponge in it, and put it on a stick of hyssop, and then press it against the hot lips of Christ. You say the wine was an anæsthetic, and intended to relieve or deaden the pain. But the vinegar was an insult. I am disposed to adopt the theory of the old English commentators, who believed that instead of its being an opiate to soothe, it was vinegar to insult. Malaga and Burgundy for grand dukes and duchesses, and costly wines from royal vats for bloated imperials; but stinging acids for a dying Christ. He took the vinegar.

In some lives the saccharine seems to predominate. Life in sunshine on a bank of flowers. A thousand hands to clap approval. In December or in January, looking across their table, they see all their family present. Health rubicund. Skies flamboyant. Days resilient. But in a great many cases there are not so many sugars as acids. The annoyances, and the vexations, and the disappointments of life overpower the successes. There is a gravel in almost every shoe. An Arabian legend says that there was a worm in Solomon's staff, gnawing its strength away; and there is a weak spot in every earthly support that a man leans on. King George of England forgot all the grandeurs of his throne because, one day in an interview, Beau Brummell called him by his first name, and addressed him as a servant, crying: "George, ring the bell!" Miss Langdon, honored all the world over for her poetic genius, is so worried with the evil reports set afloat regarding her, that she is found dead, with an empty bottle of prussic acid in her hand. Goldsmith said that his life was a wretched being, and that all that want and contempt could bring to it had been brought, and cries out: "What, then, is there formidable in a jail?" Correggio's fine painting is hung up for a tavern sign. Hogarth cannot sell his best paintings except through a raffle. Andrew Delsart makes the great fresco in the Church of the Annunciata, at Florence, and gets for pay a sack of corn; and there are annoyances and vexations in high places as well as in low places, showing that in a great many lives the sours are greater than the sweets. "When Jesus, therefore, had received the vinegar."

It is absurd to suppose that a man who has always been well can sympathize with those who are sick; or that one who has always been honored can appreciate the sorrow of those who are despised; or that one who has been born to a great fortune can understand the distress and the straits of those who are destitute. The fact that Christ himself took the vinegar makes him able to sympathize to-day and forever with all those whose cup is filled with sharp acids of this life. He took the vinegar!

In the first place, there is the sourness of betrayal. The treachery of Judas hurt Christ's feelings more than all the friendship of his disciples did him good. You have had many friends; but there was one friend upon whom you put especial stress. You feasted him. You loaned him money. You befriended him in the dark passes of life, when he especially needed a friend. Afterward, he turned upon you, and he took advantage of your former intimacies. He wrote against you. He talked against you. He microscopized your faults. He flung contempt at you when you ought to have received from him nothing but gratitude. At first, you could not sleep at night. Then you went about with a sense of having been stung. That difficulty will never be healed, for though mutual friends may arbitrate in the matter until you shall shake hands, the old cordiality will never come back. Now, I commend to all such the sympathy of a betrayed Christ! Why, they sold him for less than our twenty dollars! They all forsook him, and fled. They cut him to the quick. He drank that cup of betrayal to the dregs. He took the vinegar!

There is also the sourness of pain. There are some of you who have not seen a well day for many years. By keeping out of draughts, and by carefully studying dietetics, you continue to this time; but oh, the headaches, and the sideaches, and the backaches, and the heartaches which have been your accompaniment all the way through! You have struggled under a heavy mortgage of physical disabilities; and instead of the placidity that once characterized you, it is now only with great effort that you keep away from irritability and sharp retort. Difficulties of respiration, of digestion, of locomotion, make up the great obstacle in your life, and you tug and sweat along the pathway, and wonder when the exhaustion will end. My friends, the brightest crowns in heaven will not be given to those who, in stirrups, dashed to the cavalry charge, while the general applauded, and the sound of clashing sabres rang through the land; but the brightest crowns in heaven, I believe, will be given to those who trudged on amid chronic ailments which unnerved their strength, yet all the time maintaining their faith in God. It is comparatively easy to fight in a regiment of a thousand men, charging up the parapets to the sound of martial music; but it is not so easy to endure when no one but the nurse and the doctor are the witnesses of the Christian fortitude. Besides that, you never had any pains worse than Christ's. The sharpnesses that stung through his brain, through his hands, through his feet, through his heart, were as great as yours certainly. He was as sick and as weary. Not a nerve, or muscle, or ligament escaped. All the pangs of all the nations of all the ages compressed into one sour cup. He took the vinegar!

THE CITY VAN OR BLACK MARIA.

There is also the sourness of poverty. Your income does not meet your outgoings, and that always gives an honest man anxiety. There is no sign of destitution about you—pleasant appearance, and a cheerful home for you; but God only knows what a time you have had to manage your private finances. Just as the bills run up, the wages seem to run down. But you are not the only one who has not been paid for hard work. The great Wilkie sold his celebrated piece—"The Blind Fiddler"—for fifty guineas, although afterwards it brought its thousands. The world hangs in admiration over the sketch of Gainsborough, yet that very sketch hung for years in the shop-window because there was not any purchaser. Oliver Goldsmith sold his "Vicar of Wakefield" for a few pounds, in order to keep the bailiff out of the door; and the vast majority of men in all occupations and professions are not fully paid for their work. You may say nothing, but life to you is a hard push; and when you sit down with your wife and talk over the expenses, you both rise up discouraged. You abridge here, and you abridge there, and you get things snug for smooth sailings, and lo! suddenly there is a large doctor's bill to pay, or you have lost your pocket-book, or some creditor has failed, and you are thrown a-beam end Well, brother, you are in glorious company. Christ owned not the house in which he stopped, or the colt on which he rode, or the boat in which he sailed. He lived in a borrowed house; he was buried in a borrowed grave. Exposed to all kinds of weather, yet he had only one suit of clothes. He breakfasted in the morning, and no one could possibly tell where he could get anything to eat before night. He would have been pronounced a financial failure. He had to perform a miracle to get money to pay a tax-bill. Not a dollar did he own. Privation of domesticity; privation of nutritious food; privation of a comfortable couch on which to sleep; privation of all worldly resources. The kings of the earth had chased chalices out of which to drink; but Christ had nothing but a plain cup set before him, and it was very sharp, and it was very sour. He took the vinegar.

There also is the sourness of bereavement. There were years that passed along before your family circle was invaded by death; but the moment the charmed circle was broken, everything seemed to dissolve. Hardly have you put the black apparel in the wardrobe, before you have again to take it out. Great and rapid changes in your family record. You got the house and rejoiced in it, but the charm was gone as soon as the crape hung on the door-bell. The one upon whom you most depended was taken away from you. A cold marble slab lies on your heart to-day. Once, as the children romped through the house, you put your hand over your aching head, and said: "Oh, if I could only have it still." Oh, it is too still now. You lost your patience when the tops, and the strings, and the shells were left amid floor; but oh, you would be willing to have the trinkets scattered all over the floor again, if they were scattered by the same hands. With what a ruthless ploughshare bereavement rips up the heart. But Jesus knows all about that. You cannot tell him anything new in regard to bereavement. He had only a few friends, and when he lost one it brought tears to his eyes. Lazarus had often entertained him at his house. Now Lazarus is dead and buried, and Christ breaks down with emotion—the convulsion of grief shuddering through all the ages of bereavement. Christ knows what it is to go through the house missing a familiar inmate. Christ knows what it is to see an unoccupied place at the table. Were there not four of them—Mary, and Martha, and Christ, and Lazarus? Four of them. But where is Lazarus? Lonely and afflicted Christ, his great loving eyes filled with tears, which drop from eye to cheek, and from cheek to beard, and from beard to robe, and from robe to floor. Oh, yes, yes, he knows all about the loneliness and the heartbreak. He took the vinegar!

Then there is the sourness of the death-hour. Whatever else we may escape, that acid-sponge will be pressed to our lips. I sometimes have a curiosity to know how I will behave when I come to die. Whether I will be calm or excited—whether I will be filled with reminiscence or with anticipation. I cannot say. But come to the point, I must and you must. In the six thousand years that have passed, only two persons have got into the eternal world without death, and I do not suppose that God is going to send a carriage for us with horses of flame, to draw us up the steeps of heaven; but I suppose we will have to go like the preceding generations. An officer from the future world will knock at the door of our heart and serve on us the writ of ejectment, and we will have to surrender. And we will wake up after these autumnal, and wintry, and vernal, and summery glories have vanished from our vision—we will wake up into a realm which has only one season, and that the season of everlasting love. But you say: "I don't want to break out from my present associations. It is so chilly and so damp to go down the stairs of that vault. I don't want anything drawn so tightly over my eyes. If there were only some way of breaking through the partition between worlds without tearing this body all to shreds. I wonder if the surgeons and the doctors cannot compound a mixture by which this body and soul can all the time be kept together? Is there no escape from this separation?" None; absolutely none. So I look over this audience to-day—the vast majority of you seeming in good health and spirits—and yet I realize that in a short time, all of us will be gone—gone from earth, and gone for ever. A great many men tumble through the gates of the future, as it were, and we do not know where they have gone, and they only add gloom and mystery to the passage; but Jesus Christ so mightily stormed the gates of that future world, that they have never since been closely shut. Christ knows what it is to leave this world, of the beauty of which he was more appreciative than we ever could be. He knows the exquisiteness of the phosphorescence of the sea; he trod it. He knows the glories of the midnight heavens; for they were the spangled canopy of his wilderness pillow. He knows about the lilies; he twisted them into his sermon. He knows about the fowls of the air; they whirred their way through his discourse. He knows about the sorrows of leaving this beautiful world. Not a taper was kindled in the darkness. He died physicianless. He died in cold sweat, and dizziness, and hemorrhage, and agony that have put him in sympathy with all the dying. He goes through Christendom, and he gathers up the stings out of all the death pillows, and he puts them under his own neck and head. He gathers on his own tongue the burning thirsts of many generations. The sponge is soaked in the sorrows of all those who have died in their beds as well as soaked in the sorrows of all those who perished in icy or fiery martyrdom. While heaven was pitying, and earth was mocking, and hell was deriding, he took the vinegar.

To all those in this audience to whom life has been an acerbity—a dose they could not swallow, a draught that set their teeth on edge and a-rasping—I preach the omnipotent sympathy of Jesus Christ. The sister of Herschel the astronomer used to help him in his work. He got all the credit; she got none. She used to spend much of her time polishing the telescopes through which he brought the distant worlds nigh, and it is my ambition now, this hour, to clear the lens of your spiritual vision, so that looking through the dark night of your earthly troubles you may behold the glorious constellation of a Savior's mercy and a Savior's love. Oh, my friends, do not try to carry all your ills alone. Do not put your poor shoulder under the Appenines when the Almighty Christ is ready to lift up all your burdens. When you have a trouble of any kind, you rush this way, and that way; and you wonder what this man will say about it, and what that man will say about it; and you try this prescription, and that prescription, and the other prescription. Oh, why do you not go straight to the heart of Christ, knowing that for our own sinning and suffering race he took the vinegar!

There was a vessel that had been tossed on the seas for a great many weeks, and been disabled, and the supply of water gave out, and the crew were dying of thirst. After many days, they saw a sail against the sky. They signaled it. When the vessel came nearer, the people on the suffering ship cried to the captain of the other vessel: "Send us some water. We are dying for lack of water." And the captain on the vessel that was hailed responded: "Dip your buckets where you are. You are in the mouth of the Amazon, and there are scores of miles of fresh water all around about you, and hundreds of feet deep." And then they dropped their buckets over the side of the vessel, and brought up the clear, bright, fresh water, and put out the fire of their thirst. So I hail you to-day, after a long and perilous voyage, thirsting as you are for pardon, and thirsting for comfort, and thirsting for eternal life; and I ask you, What is the use of your going in that death-struck state, while all around you is the deep, clear, wide, sparkling flood of God's sympathetic mercy? Oh, dip your buckets, and drink, and live forever. "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely."

Yet my utterance is almost choked at the thought that there are people here who will refuse this Divine sympathy; and they will try to fight their own battles, and drink their own vinegar, and carry their own burdens; and their life, instead of being a triumphal march from victory to victory, will be a hobbling-on from defeat to defeat, until they make final surrender to retributive disaster. Oh, I wish I could this morning gather up in mine arms all the woes of men and women—all their heartaches—all their disappointments—all their chagrins—and just take them right to the feet of a sympathizing Jesus. He took the vinegar.

Nana Sahib, after he had lost his last battle in India, fell back into the jungles of Iheri—jungles so full of malaria that no mortal can live there. He carried with him also a ruby of great lustre and of great value. He died in those jungles; his body was never found, and the ruby has never yet been discovered. And I fear that to-day there are some who will fall back from this subject into the sickening, killing jungles of their sin, carrying a gem of infinite value—a priceless soul—to be lost forever. Oh, that that ruby might flash in the eternal coronation. But no. There are some, I fear, in this audience who turn away from this offered mercy, and comfort, and Divine sympathy; notwithstanding that Christ, for all who would accept his grace, trudged the long way, and suffered the lacerating thongs, and received in his face the expectorations of the filthy mob, and for the guilty, and the discouraged, and the discomforted of the race, took the vinegar. May God Almighty break the infatuation, and lead you out into the strong hope, and the good cheer, and the glorious sunshine of this triumphant Gospel!

CHAPTER XXII.

THE DIVISION OF SPOILS.

In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.—Gen. xlix: 27.

There is in this chapter such an affluence of simile and allegory, such a mingling of metaphors, that there are a thousand thoughts in it not on the surface. Old Jacob, dying, is telling the fortunes of his children. He prophesies the devouring propensities of Benjamin and his descendants. With his dim old eyes he looks off and sees the hunters going out to the fields, ranging them all day, and at nightfall coming home, the game slung over the shoulder, and reaching the door of the tent, the hunters begin to distribute the game, and one takes a coney, and another a rabbit, and another a roe. "In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." Or it may be a reference to the habits of wild beasts that slay their prey, and then drag it back to the cave or lair, and divide it among the young.

There is nothing more fascinating than the life of a hunter. On a certain day in all England you can hear the crack of the sportsman's gun, because grouse hunting has begun; and every man that can afford the time and ammunition, and can draw a bead, starts for the fields. On the 20th of October our woods and forests will resound with the shock of firearms, and will be tracked of pointers and setters, because the quail will then be a lawful prize for the sportsman. Xenophon grew eloquent in regard to the art of hunting. In the far East, people, elephant-mounted, chase the tiger. The American Indian darts his arrow at the buffalo until the frightened herd tumble over the rocks. European nobles are often found in the fox-chase and at the stag-hunt. Francis I. was called the father of hunting. Moses declares of Nimrod: "He was a mighty hunter before the Lord." Therefore, in all ages of the world, the imagery of my text ought to be suggestive, whether it means a wolf after a fox, or a man after a lion. "In the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoils."

I take my text, in the first place, as descriptive of those people who in the morning of their life give themselves up to hunting the world, but afterward, by the grace of God, in the evening of their life divide among themselves the spoils of Christian character. There are aged Christian men and women in this house who, if they gave testimony, would tell you that in the morning of their life they were after the world as intense as a hound after a hare, or as a falcon swoops upon a gazelle. They wanted the world's plaudits and the world's gains. They felt that if they could get this world they would have everything. Some of them started out for the pleasures of the world. They thought that the man who laughed loudest was happiest. They tried repartee, and conundrum, and burlesque, and madrigal. They thought they would like to be Tom Hoods, or Charles Lambs, or Edgar A. Poes. They mingled wine, and music, and the spectacular. They were worshippers of the harlequin, and the merry Andrew, and the buffoon, and the jester. Life was to them foam, and bubble, and cachination, and roystering, and grimace. They were so full of glee they could hardly repress their mirth, even on solemn occasions, and they came near bursting out hilariously even at the burial, because there was something so dolorous in the tone or countenance of the undertaker. After awhile misfortune struck them hard on the back. They found there was something they could not laugh at. Under their late hours their health gave way, or there was a death in the house. Of every green thing their soul was exfoliated. They found out that life was more than a joke. From the heart of God there blazed into their soul an earnestness they had never felt before. They awoke to their sinfulness and their immortality, and here they sit to-night, at sixty or seventy years of age, as appreciative of all innocent mirth as they ever were, but they are bent on a style of satisfaction which in early life they never hunted; the evening of their days brighter than the morning. In the morning they devoured the prey, but at night they divided the spoils.

Then there are others who started out for financial success. They see how limber the rim of a man's hat is when he bows down before some one transpicuous. They felt they would like to see how the world looked from the window of a three thousand dollar turn-out. They thought they would like to have the morning sunlight tangled in the head-gear of a dashing span. They wanted the bridges in the park to resound under the rataplan of their swift hoofs. They wanted a gilded baldrick, and so they started on the dollar hunt. They chased it up one street and chased it down another. They followed it when it burrowed in the cellar. They treed it in the roof. Wherever a dollar was expected to be, they were. They chased it across the ocean. They chased it across the land. They stopped not for the night. Hearing that dollar, even in the darkness, thrilled them as an Adirondack sportsman is thrilled at midnight by a loon's laugh. They chased that dollar to the money-vault. They chased it to the government treasury. They routed it from under the counter. All the hounds were out—all the pointers and the setters. They leaped the hedges for that dollar, and they cried: "Hark away! a dollar! a dollar!" And when at last they came upon it and had actually captured it, their excitement was like that of a falconer who has successfully flung his first hawk. In the morning of their life, oh, how they devoured the prey! But there came a better time to their soul. They found out that an immoral nature cannot live on "greenbacks." They took up a Northern Pacific bond, and there was a hole in it through which they could look into the uncertainty of all earthly treasures. They saw some Ralston, living at the rate of twenty-five thousand dollars a month, leaping from San Francisco wharf because he could not continue to live at the same ratio. They saw the wizen and paralytic bankers who had changed their souls into molten gold stamped with the image of the earth, earthy. They saw some great souls by avarice turned into *homunculi*, and they said to themselves: "I will seek after higher treasure." From that time they did not care whether they walked or rode, if Christ walked with them; nor whether they lived in a mansion or in a hut, if they dwelt under the shadow of the Almighty; nor whether they were robed in French broadcloth or in a homespun, if they had the robe of the Savior's righteousness; nor whether they were sandalled with morocco or calf-skin, if they were shod with the preparation of the gospel. Now you see peace on their countenance. Now that man says: "What a fool I was to be enchanted with this world. Why, I have more satisfaction in five minutes in the service of God than I had in all the first years of my life while I was gain getting. I like this evening of my day a great deal better than I did the morning. In the morning I greedily devoured the prey; but now it is evening, and I am gloriously dividing the spoil."

My friends, this world is a poor thing to hunt. It is healthful to go out in the woods and hunt. It rekindles the lustre of the eye. It strikes the brown of the autumnal leaf into the cheek. It gives to the rheumatic limbs a strength to leap like the roe. Christopher North's pet gun, the muckle-mounted-Meg, going off in the summer in the forests, had its echo in the winter-time in the eloquence that rang through the university halls of Edinburgh. It is healthy to go hunting in the fields; but I tell you that it is belittling and bedwarfing and belaming for a man to hunt this world. The hammer comes down on the gun-cap, and the barrel explodes and kills you instead of that which you are pursuing. When you turn out to hunt the world, the world turns out to hunt you; and as many a sportsman aiming his gun at a panther's heart has gone down under the striped claws, so, while you have been attempting to devour this world, the world has been devouring you. So it was with Lord Byron. So it was with Coleridge. So it was with Catherine of Russia. Henry II. went out hunting for this world, and its lances struck through his heart. Francis I. aimed at the world, but the assassin's dagger put an end to his ambition and his life with one stroke. Mary Queen of Scots wrote on the window of her castle:

"From the top of all my trust
Mishap hath laid me in the dust."

The Queen Dowager of Navarre was offered for her wedding day a costly and beautiful pair of gloves, and she put them on; but they were poisoned gloves, and they took her life. Better a bare hand of cold privation than a warm and poisoned glove of ruinous success. "Oh," says some young man in the audience, "I believe what you are preaching. I am going to do that very thing. In the morning of my life I am going to devour the prey, and in the evening I shall divide the spoils of Christian character. I only want a little while to sow my wild oats, and then I will be good." Young man, did you ever take the census of all the old people? How many old people are there in your house? One, two, or none? How many in a vast assemblage like this? Only here and there a gray head, like the patches of snow here and there in the fields on a late April day. The fact is that the tides of the years are so strong, that men go down under them before they get to be sixty, before they get to be fifty, before they get to be forty, before they get to be thirty; and if you, my young brother, resolve now that you will spend the morning of your days in devouring the prey, the probability is that you will never divide the spoils in the evening hour. He who postpones until old age the religion of Jesus Christ, postpones it forever. Where are the men who, thirty years ago, resolved to become Christians in old age, putting it off a certain number of years? They are in the lost world to-night. They never got to be old. The railroad collision, or the steamboat explosion, or the slip on the ice, or the falling ladder, or the sudden cold put an end to their opportunities. They have never had an opportunity since, and never will have an opportunity again. They locked the door of heaven against their soul, and they threw away the key; and if they could to-night break jail and come up shrieking to this audience, I do not think they would take two minutes to persuade us all to repentance. They chased the world, and they died in the chase. The wounded tiger turned on them. They failed to take the game that they pursued. Mounted on a swift courser, they leaped the hedge, but the courser fell on them and crushed them. Proposing to barter their soul for the world, they lost both and got neither.

While this is an encouragement to old people who are to-night unpardoned, it is no encouragement to the young who are putting off the day of grace. This doctrine that the old may be repentant is to be taken cautiously. It is medicine that kills or cures. The same medicine, given to different patients, in one case it saves life, and in the other it destroys it. This possibility of repentance at the close of life may cure the old man while it kills the young. Be cautious in taking it.

Again: my subject is descriptive of those who come to *a sudden and a radical change.* You have noticed how short a time it is from morning to night—only seven or eight hours. You know that the day has a very brief life. Its heart beats twenty-four times, and then it is dead. How quick this transition in the character of these Benjaminites! "In the morning they shall devour the prey, and at night they shall divide the spoils." Is it possible that there shall be such a transformation in any of our characters? Yes, a man may be at seven o'clock in the morning an all-devouring worldling, and at seven o'clock at night he may be a peaceful, distributive Christian. Conversion is instantaneous. A man passes into the kingdom of God quicker than down the sky runs zig-zag lightning. A man may be anxious about his soul for a great many years; that does not make him a Christian. A man may pray a great while; that does not make him a Christian. A man may resolve on the reformation of his character, and have that resolution going on a great while; that does not make him a Christian. But the very instant when he flings his soul on the mercy of Jesus Christ, that instant is lustration, emancipation, resurrection. Up to that point he is going in the wrong direction; after that point he is going in the right direction. Before that moment he is a child of sin; after that moment he is a child of God. Before that moment hellward; after that moment heavenward. Before that moment devouring the prey; after that moment dividing the spoil. Five minutes is as good as five years. My hearer, you know very well that the best things you have done you have done in a flash. You made up your mind in an instant to buy, or to sell, or to invest, or to stop, or to start. If you had missed that one chance, you would have missed it forever. Now just as precipitate, and quick, and spontaneous will be the ransom of your soul. This morning you were making a calculation. You got on the track of some financial or social game. With your pen or pencil you were pursuing it. This very morning you were devouring the prey; but to-night you are in a different mood. You find that all heaven is offered you. You wonder how you can get it for yourself and for your family. You wonder what resources it will give you now and hereafter. You are dividing peace, and comfort, and satisfaction, and Christian reward in your soul. You are dividing the spoil.

Last Sabbath-night, at the close of the service, I said to some persons: "When did you first become serious about your soul?" And they told me: "To-night." And I said to others: "When did you give your heart to God?" And they said: "To-night." And I said to still others: "When did you resolve to serve the Lord all the days of your life?" And they said: "To-night." I saw by the gaiety of their apparel that when the grace of God struck them they were devouring the prey; but I saw also, in the flood of joyful tears, and in the kindling raptures on their brow, and in their exhilarant and transporting utterances, that they were dividing the spoil. If any of you were in this building when these lights were struck to-night, you know that with one touch of electricity they all blazed. Oh, I would to God that the darkness of your souls might be broken up, and that by one quick, overwhelming, instantaneous flash of illumination you might be brought into the light and the liberty of the sons of God!

You see that religion is a different thing from what some of you people supposed. You thought it was decadence; you thought religion was maceration; you thought it was highway robbery; that it struck one down and left him half dead; that it plucked out the eyes; that it plucked out the plumes of the soul; that it broke the wing and crushed the beak as it came clawing with its black talons through the air. No, that is not religion. What is religion? It is dividing the spoils. It is taking a defenceless soul and panoplying it for eternal conquest. It is the distribution of prizes by the king's hand, every medal stamped with a coronation. It is an exhilaration, an expansion. It is imparadisation. It is enthronement. Religion makes a man master of earth, and death, and hell. It goes forth to gather the medals of victory won by Prince Emanuel, and the diadems of heaven, and the glories of realms terrestrial, and celestial, and then, after ranging all worlds for everything that is resplendent, it divides the spoil. What was it that James Turner, the famous English evangelist, was doing when in his dying moment he said: "Christ is all! Christ is all!" Why, he was entering into light; he was rounding the Cape of Good Hope; he was dividing the spoil. What was the aged Christian Quakeress doing when at eighty years of age she arose in the meeting one day and said: "The time of my departure is come. My grave clothes are falling off"? She was dividing the spoil.

"She longed with wings to fly away,
And mix with that eternal day."

What is Daniel now doing, the lion tamer? and Elijah who was drawn by the flaming coursers? and Paul, the rattling of whose chains made kings quake? and all the other victims of flood, and fire, and wreck, and guillotine —where are they? Dividing the spoil.

"Ten thousand times ten thousand,
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransomed saints
Throng up the steeps of light.

" 'Tis finished, all is finished,
Their fight with death and sin;
Lift high your golden gates,
And let the victors in."

Oh, what a grand thing it is to be a Christian! We begin to-night to divide the spoil, but the distribution will not be completed to all eternity. There is a poverty-struck soul, there is a business-despoiled soul, there is a sin-struck soul, there is a bereaved soul—why do you not come and get the spoils of Christian character, the comfort, the joy, the peace, the salvation that I am sent to offer you in my Master's name? Though your knees knock together in weakness, though your hand tremble in fear, though your eyes rain tears of uncontrollable weeping—come and get the spoils. Rest for all the weary. Pardon for all the guilty. Labor for all the bestormed. Life for all the dead. I verily believe that there are some who have come in here outcast because the world is against them, and because they feel God is against them, who will go away to-night, saying:

> "I came to Jesus as I was,
> Weary and worn and sad;
> I found in him a resting place,
> And he has made me glad."

Though you came in children of the world, you may go away heirs of heaven. Though this very autumnal morning you were devouring the prey, to-night, all worlds witnessing, you may divide the spoil.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE BLACKSMITHS' CAPTIVITY.

Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel: for the Philistines said, lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears. But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock. Yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to sharpen the goads.—I. Samuel xiii: 19–21.

What a scalding subjugation for the Israelites! The Philistines had carried off all the blacksmiths, and torn down all the blacksmiths' shops, and abolished the blacksmith's trade in the land of Israel. The Philistines would not even allow these parties to work their valuable mines of brass and iron, nor might they make any swords or spears. There were only two swords left in all the land. Yea, these Philistines went on until they had taken all the grindstones from the land of Israel, so that if an Israelitish farmer wanted to sharpen his plough or his axe, he had to go over to the garrison of the Philistines to get it done. There was only one sharpening instrument left in the land, and that was a file. The farmers and the mechanics having nothing to whet up the coulter, and the goad, and the pickaxe, save a simple file, industry was hindered, and work practically disgraced. The great idea of these Philistines was to keep the Israelites disarmed. They might get iron out of the hills to make swords of, but they would not have any blacksmiths to weld this iron. If they got the iron welded, they would have no grindstones on which to bring the instruments of agriculture or the military weapons up to an edge. Oh, you poor, weaponless Israelites, reduced to a file, how I pity you! But these Philistines were not for ever to keep their heel on the neck of God's children. Jonathan, on his hands and knees, climbs up a great rock beyond which were the Philistines; and his armor-bearer, on his hands and knees, climbs up the same rock, and these two men, with their two swords, hew to pieces the Philistines, the Lord throwing a great terror upon them. So it was then; so it is now. Two men of God on their knees, mightier than a Philistine host on their feet.

I learn first from this subject, *how dangerous it is for the Church of God to allow its weapons to stay in the hands of its enemies.* These Israelites might again and again have obtained a supply of swords and weapons, as for instance when they took the spoils of the Ammonites; but these Israelites seemed content to have no swords, no spears, no blacksmiths, no grindstones, no active iron mines, until it was too late for them to make any resistance. I see the farmers tugging along with their pickaxes and ploughs, and I say: "Where are you going with those things?" They say: "Oh, we are going over to the garrison of the Philistines to get these things sharpened." I say: "You foolish men, why don't you sharpen them at home?" "Oh," they say, "the blacksmiths' shops are all torn down, and we have nothing left us but a file."

So it is in the Church of Jesus Christ to-day. We are too willing to give up our weapons to the enemy. The world boasts that it has gobbled up the schools, and the colleges, and the arts, and the sciences, and the literature, and the printing press. Infidelity is making a mighty attempt to get all our weapons in its hand, and then to keep them. You know it is making this boast all the time; and after a while, when the great battle between sin and righteousness has opened, if we do not look out we will be as badly off as these Israelites, without any swords to fight with, and without any sharpening instruments. I call upon the superintendents of literary institutions to see to it that the men who go into the classrooms to stand beside the Leyden jars, and the electric batteries, and the microscopes and telescopes, be children of God, not Philistines. The Carlylian, Emerson, and Tyndallean thinkers of this day are trying to get all the intellectual weapons of this century in their own grasp. What we want is scientific Christians to capture the science, and scholastic Christians to capture the scholarship, and philosophic Christians to capture the philosophy, and lecturing Christians, to take back the lecturing platform. We want to send out against Schenkel and Strauss and Renan, a Theodore Christlieb of Bonn; and against the infidel scientists of the day, a God-worshipping Silliman and Hitchcock and Agassiz. We want to capture all the philosophical apparatus, and swing around the telescopes on the swivel, until through them we can see the morning star of the Redeemer, and with mineralogical hammer discover the "Rock of ages," and amid the flora of the realms find the "Rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley." We want a clergy learned enough to discourse of the human eye, showing it to be a microscope and telescope in one instrument, with eight hundred wonderful contrivances, and lids closing 30,000 or 40,000 times a day; all its muscles and nerves and bones showing the infinite skill of an infinite God, and then winding up with the peroration: "He that formed the eye, shall he not see?" And then we want to discourse about the human ear, its wonderful integuments, membranes, and vibration, and its chain of small bones, and its auditory nerve, closing with the question: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear?" And we want some one able to expound the first chapter of Genesis, bringing to it the geology and the astronomy of the world, until, as Job suggested, "the stones of the field shall be in league" with the truth, and "the stars in their course shall fight against Sisera." Oh, Church of God, go out and recapture these weapons. Let men of God go out and take possession of the platform. Let the debauched printing-press of this country be recaptured for Christ, and the reporters, and the type-setters, and the editors, and publishers be made to swear allegiance to the Lord God of truth. Ah, my friend, that day must come, and if the great body of Christian men have not the faith, or the courage, or the consecration to do it, then let some Jonathan, on his busy hands and on his praying knees, climb up on the rock of hindrance, and in the name of the Lord God of Israel slash to pieces those literary Philistines. If these men will not be converted to God, then they must be destroyed.

Again, I learn from this subject *what a large amount of the Church's resources is actually hidden, and buried, and undeveloped.* The Bible intimates that that was a very rich land—this land of Israel. It says: "The stones are iron, and out of the hills thou shalt dig brass," and yet hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of this metal was kept under the hills. Well, that is the difficulty with the Church of God at this day. Its talent is not developed. If one-half of its energy could be brought out, it might take the public iniquities of the day by the throat and make them bite the dust. If human eloquence were consecrated to the Lord Jesus Christ, it could in a few years persuade this whole earth to surrender to God. There is enough undeveloped energy in this one Church to bring all Brooklyn to Christ—enough undeveloped Christian energy in the City of Brooklyn to bring all the United States to Christ—enough undeveloped Christian energy in the United States to bring the whole world to Christ; but it is buried under strata of indifference and under whole mountains of sloth. Now is it not time for the mining to begin, and the pickaxes to plunge, and for this buried metal to be brought out and put into the furnaces, and be turned into howitzers and carbines for the Lord's host? The vast majority of Christians in this day are useless. The most of the Lord's battalion belong to the reserve corps. The most of the crew are asleep in the hammocks. The most of the metal is under the hills. Oh, is it not time for the Church of God to rouse up and understand that we want all the energies, all the talent, and all the wealth enlisted for Christ's sake? I like the nickname that the English soldiers gave to Blucher, the Commander. They called him "Old Forwards." We have had enough retreats in the Church of Christ; let us have a glorious advance. And I say to you to-night, as the General said when his troops were affrighted. Rising up in his stirrups, his hair flying in the wind, he lifted up his voice until 20,000 troops heard him, crying out: "Forward, the whole line!"

Again: I learn from this subject, *that we sometimes do well to take advantage of the world's sharpening instruments.* These Israelites were reduced to a file, and so they went over to the garrison of the Philistines to get their axes and their goads, and their ploughs sharpened. The Bible distinctly states it—the text which I read at the beginning of the service—that they had no other instruments now with which to do this work, and the Israelites did right when they went over to the Philistines to use their grindstones. My friends, is it not right for us to employ the world's grindstones? If there be art, if there be logic, if there be business faculty on the other side, let us go over and employ it for Christ's sake. The fact is, we fight with too dull weapons, and we work with too dull implements. We hack and we maul when we ought to make a keen stroke. Let us go over among sharp business men, and among sharp literary men, and find out what their tact is, and then transfer it to the cause of Christ. If they have science and art it will do us good to rub against it. In other words: let us employ the world's grindstones. We will listen to their music, and we will watch their acumen, and we will use their grindstones; and we will borrow their philosophical apparatus to make our experiments, and we will borrow their printing-presses to publish our Bibles, and we will borrow their rail-trains to carry our Christian literature, and we will borrow their ships to transport our missionaries. That was what made Paul such a master in his day. He not only got all the learning he could get of Doctor Gamaliel, but afterward, standing on Mars Hill, and in crowded thoroughfare, quoted their poetry, and grasped their logic, and wielded their eloquence, and employed their mythology, until Dionysius the Areopagite, learned in the schools of Athens and Heliopolis, went down under his tremendous powers. That was what gave Thomas Chalmers his power in his day. He conquered the world's astronomy and compelled it to ring out the wisdom and greatness of the Lord, until for the second time, the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy. That was what gave to Jonathan Edwards his influence in his day. He conquered the world's metaphysics and forced it into the service of God, until not only the old meeting-house at Northampton, Massachusetts, but all Christendom felt thrilled by his Christian power. Well, now, my friends, we all have tools of Christian usefulness. Do not let them lose their edges. We want no rusty blades in this fight. We want no coulter that cannot rip up the glebe. We want no axe that cannot fell the trees. We want no goad that cannot start the lazy team. Let us get the very best grindstones we can find, though they be in the possession of the Philistines, compelling them to turn the crank while we bear down with all our might on the swift-revolving wheel until all our energies and faculties shall be brought up to a bright, keen, sharp, glittering edge.

Again: my subject teaches us *on what a small allowance Philistine iniquity puts a man.* Yes; these Philistines shut up the mines, and then they took the spears and the swords, then they took the blacksmiths, then they took the grindstones, and they took everything but a file. Oh, that is the way sin works; it grabs everything. It begins with robbery, and it ends with robbery. It despoils this faculty and that faculty, and keeps on until the whole nature is gone. Was the man eloquent before, it generally thickens his tongue. Was he fine in personal appearance, it mars his visage. Was he affluent, it sends the sheriff to sell him out. Was he influential, it destroys his popularity. Was he placid, and genial, and loving, it makes him splenetic and cross; and so utterly is he changed that you can see he is sarcastic and rasping, and that the Philistines have left him nothing but a file. Oh, "the way of the transgressor is hard." His cup is bitter. His night is dark. His pangs are deep. His end is terrific. Philistine iniquity says to that man: "Now, surrender to me, and I will give you all you want—music for the dance, swift steeds for the race, imperial couch to slumber on, and you shall be refreshed with the rarest fruits, in baskets of golden filagree." He lies. The music turns out to be a groan. The fruits burst the rind with rank poison. The filagree is made up of twisted snakes. The couch is a grave. Small allowance of rest; small allowance of peace; small allowance of comfort. Cold, hard, rough—nothing but a file. So it was with Voltaire, the most applauded man of his day:

> "The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
> *Bon mots* to gall the Christian and the Jew.
> An infidel when well, but what when sick?
> Oh, then a text would touch him to the quick."

Seized with hemorrhage of the lungs in Paris, where he had gone to be crowned in the theater as the idol of all France, he sends a messenger to get a priest, that he may be reconciled to the Church before he dies. A great terror falls upon him. He makes the place all round about him so dismal that the nurse declares that she would not for all the wealth of Europe see another infidel die. Philistine iniquity had promised him all the world's garlands, but in the last hour of his life, when he needed solacing, sent tearing across his conscience and his nerves a file, a file. So it was with Lord Byron, his uncleanness in England only surpassed by his uncleanness in Venice, then going on to end his brilliant misery at Missolonghi, fretting at his nurse Fletcher, fretting at himself, fretting at the world, fretting at God; and he who gave to the world "Childe Harold," and "Sardanapalus," and "The Prisoner of Chillon," and "The Siege of Corinth," reduced to nothing but a file! Oh, sin has great facility for making promises, but it has just as great facility for breaking them. A Christian life is the only cheerful life, while a life of wicked surrender is remorse, ruin, and death. Its painted glee is sepulchral ghastliness. In the brightest days of the Mexican Empire, Montezuma said he felt gnawing at his heart something like a canker. Sin, like a monster wild beast of the forest, sometimes licks all over its victim in order that the victim may be more easily swallowed; but generally sin rasps, and galls, and tears, and upbraids, and files. Is it not so, Herod? Is it not so, Hildebrand? Is it not so, Robespierre? Aye! aye! it is so; it is so. "The way of the wicked he turneth upside down." History tells us that when Rome was founded, on that day there were twelve vultures flying through the air; but when a transgressor dies, the sky is black with whole flocks of them. Vultures! When I see sin robbing so many of my hearers, and I see them going down day by day, and week by week, I must give a plain warning. I dare not keep it back lest I risk the salvation of my own soul. Rover and Pirate pulled down the warning bell on Inchcape Rock, thinking that he would have a chance to despoil vessels that were crushed on the rocks; but one night his own ship crashed down on this very rock, and he went down with all his cargo. God declares: "When I say to the wicked, thou shalt surely die, and thou givest him not warning, that same man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thy hands."

I learn from this subject, *what a sad thing it is when the Church of God loses its metal.* These Philistines saw that if they could only get all the metallic weapons out of the hands of the Israelites, all would be well, and, therefore, they took the swords and the spears. They did not want them to have a single metallic weapon. When the metal of the Israelites was gone, their strength was gone. This is the trouble with the Church of God to-day. It is surrendering its courage. It has not got enough metal. How seldom it is that you see a man taking his position in pew, or in pulpit, or in a religous society, and holding that position against all oppression, and all trial, and all persecution, and all criticism. The Church of God to-day wants more backbone, more defiance, more consecrated bravery, more metal. How often you see a man start out in some good enterprise, and at the first blast of newspaperdom he has collapsed, and all his courage gone, forgetful of the fact that if a man be right, all the newspapers of the earth, with all their columns pounding away at him, cannot do him any permanent damage. It is only when a man is wrong that he can be damaged. Why, God is going to vindicate his truth, and he is going to stand by you, my friends, in every effort you make for Christ's cause and the salvation of men. I sometimes say to my wife: "There is something wrong; the newspapers have not assaulted me for six weeks! I have not done my duty against public iniquities, and I will stir them up next Sunday." Then I stir them up, and all the following week the devil howls, and howls, showing that I have hit him very hard. Go forth in the service of Christ and do your whole duty. You have one sphere. I have another sphere. "The Lord of Hosts is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge. Selah." We want more of the determination of Jonathan. I do not suppose he was a very wonderful man; but he got on his knees and clambered up the rock, and with the help of his armor-bearer he hewed down the Philistines; and a man of very ordinary intellectual attainments, on his knees, can storm anything for God and for the truth. We want something of the determination of the general who went into the war, and as he entered his first battle, his knees knocked together, his physical courage not quite up to his moral courage; and he looked down at his knees, and said: "Ah, if you knew where I was going to take you, you would shake worse than that!" There is only one question for you to ask and for me to ask. What does God want me to do? Where is the field? Where is the work? Where is the anvil? Where is the prayer-meeting? Where is the pulpit? And, finding out what God wants us to do, go ahead and do it—all the energies of our body, mind, and soul enlisted in the undertaking. Oh, my brethren, we have but little time in which to fight for God. You will be dead soon. Put in the Christian cause every energy that God gives you. "What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might, for there is neither wisdom nor device in the grave whither we are all hastening." Here we are at the end of the ecclesiastical year, our congregation partially dispersed, and others to go. Opportunities of usefulness gone forever; souls that might have been benefited three months ago never again coming under our Christian influence. Oh, is it not high time that we awake out of sleep? Church of God, lift up your head at the coming victory! The Philistines will go down, and the Israelites will go up. We are on the winning side. Hear that—on the winning side. I think just now the King's horses are being hooked up to the chariot, and when he does ride down the sky there will be such a hosanna among his friends, and such a wailing among his enemies, as will make the earth tremble and the heavens sing. I see now the plumes of the Lord's cavalrymen tossing in the air. The archangel before the throne has already burnished his trumpet, and then he will put its golden lips to his own, and he will blow the long, loud blast that will make all the nations free. Clap your hands, all ye people! Hark! I hear the falling thrones, and the dashing down of demolished iniquities.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE DIET OF ASHES.

He feedeth on ashes.—Isa. xliv: 20.

Here is a description of the idolatry and worldliness of people in Isaiah's time, and of a very prevalent style of diet in our time. The world spreads a great feast, and invites the race to sit at it. Platters are heaped up. Chalices are full. Garlands wreathe the wall. The guests sit down amid outbursts of hilarity. They take the fruit and it turns into ashes. They uplift the tankards and their contents prove to be ashes. They touch the garlands and they scatter into ashes. I do not know any passage of Scripture which so apothegmatically sets forth the unsatisfactory nature of this world for eye, and tongue, and lip, and heart, as this particular passage, describing the votary of the world, when it says: "He feedeth on ashes."

I shall not take the estimate by those whose life has been a failure. A man may despise the world simply because he cannot win it. Having failed, in his chagrin he may decry that which he would like to have had as his bride. I shall, therefore, take only the testimony of those who have been magnificently successful.

In the first place, I shall ask the kings of the earth to stand up and give testimony, telling of the long story of sleepless nights, and poisoned cups, and threatened invasion, and dreaded rebellion. Ask the Georges, ask the Henrys, ask the Marys, ask the Louises, ask the Catherines, whether they found the throne a safe seat, and the crown a pleasant covering. Ask the French guillotine in Madam Tussaud's Museum about the queenly necks it has dissevered. Ask the Tower of London and its headsman's block. Ask the Tuilleries, and Henry VIII., and Cardinal Wolsey to rise out of the dust and say what they think of worldly honors. Ghastly with the first and the second death, they rise up with eyeless sockets and grinning skeletons, and stagger forth, unable at first to speak at all, but afterward hoarsely whispering: "Ashes! ashes!"

I call up also a group of commercial adepts to give testimony; and here again, those who have been only moderately successful may not testify. All the witnesses must be millionaires. What a grand thing it must be to own a railroad, to control a bank, to possess all the houses on one street, to have vast investments tumbling in upon you day after day, whether you work or not. No; no. William B. Astor, a few days before his death, sits in his office in New York, grieving almost until he is sick, because rents have gone down. A. T. Stewart finds his last days full of foreboding and doubt. When a Christian man proposes to talk to him about the matters of the soul, he cries: "Go away from me! Go away from me;" not satisfied until the man has got outside the door. Come up, ye millionaires, from various cemeteries and graveyards, and tell us now what you think of banks, and mills, and factories, and counting-houses, and marble palaces, and presidential banquets. They stagger forth and lean against the cold slab of the tomb, mouthing with toothless gums and gesticulating with fleshless hands and shivering with the chill of sepulchral dampness, while they cry out: "Ashes!"

I must call up now, also, a group of sinful pleasurists, and here again I will not take the testimony of those who had merely the ordinary gratifications of life. The witnesses must have had excess of delight. Their pleasures were pyramidal. They bloomed paradisaically. If they drank wine, it must be the best that was ever pressed from the vineyards of Hockheimer. If they listened to music, it must be the costliest opera, with a world-renowned *prima donna.* If they sinned, they chased polished uncleanness, and graceful despair, and glittering damnation. Stand up, Alcibiades, and Aaron Burr, and Lord Byron, and Charles the second—what think you now of midnight revel, and sinful carnival, and damask-curtain abomination? Answer! The color goes out of the cheek, the dregs are serpent-twisted in the bottom of the wine-cup, the bright lights quenched in blackness of darkness. They jingle together the broken glasses, and rend the faded silks, and shut the door of the deserted banqueting hall, while they cry: "Ashes! ashes!"

A troop of infidels: There are a great many in this day who try to feed their soul on infidelity mixed with truth. Their religion is made up of ten degrees of humanitarianism, and ten degrees of transcendentalism, and ten degrees of egotism with one degree of Gospel truth, and with that mixture they make the poor, miserable cud which their immortal souls chew, while the meadows of God's Word are green and luxuriant with well-watered pastures. Did you ever see a bright infidel? Did you ever meet a placid skeptic? Did you ever find a contented atheist? Not one. From the days of Gibbon and Voltaire down, not one. They quarrel about God. They quarrel about the Bible. They quarrel about each other. They quarrel with themselves. They gather all the Divine teachings, and under them the fires of their own wit, and scorn, and sarcasm, and

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then they dance in the light of that blaze, and they scratch amid the rubbish for something with which to help them in the days of trouble, and something to comfort them in the days of death, finding for their distraught and destroyed souls, ashes—ashes. Voltaire declared: "This globe seems to me more like a collection of carcasses than of men. I wish I had never been born." Hume says: "I am like a man who has run on rocks and quicksands, and yet I contemplate putting out on the sea in the same leaky and weather-beaten craft." Chesterfield says: "I have been behind the scenes, and I have noticed the clumsey pulleys and the dirty ropes by which all the scene is managed, and I have seen and smelt the tallow candles which throw the illumination on the stage, and I am tired and sick." Get up, then, Francis Newport, and Hume, and Voltaire, and Tom Paine, and all the infidels who have passed out of this world into the eternal world—get up now and tell what you think of all your grandiloquent derision at our holy religion. What do you think now of all your sarcasm at holy things? They come shrieking up from the lost world to the graveyards where their bodies were entombed, and point down to the white dust of dissolution, and cry: Ashes! ashes!

Oh, what a poor diet for an immortal soul. The fact is, the soul is hungry. What is that unrest that sometimes comes across you! Why is it that, surrounded by friends, and even the luxuries of life, you wish you were somewhere else, or had something you have not yet gained? The world calls it ambition. The physicians call it nervousness. Your friends call it the fidgets. I call it hunger—deep, grinding, unappeasable hunger. It starts with us when we are born, and goes on with us until the Lord God himself appeases it. It is seeking, and delving, and striving, and planning to get something we cannot get. Wealth says: "It is not in me." Science says: "It is not in me." Worldly applause says: "It is not in me." Sinful indulgence says: "It is not in me." Where, then, is it? On the banks of what stream? Slumbering in what grotto? Marching in what contest? Expiring on what pillow? Tell me, for this winged and immortal spirit, is there nothing but ashes?

In communion with God, and everlasting trust of him, is complete satisfaction. Solomon described it when he compared it to cedar houses, and golden chains, and bounding reindeer, and day-break, and imperial couch; to saffron, to calamus, to white teeth, and hands heavy with gold rings, and towers of ivory and ornamental figures; but Christ calls it bread! O famished, yet immortal soul, why not come and get it? Until our sins are pardoned, there is no rest. We know not at what moment the hounds may bay at us. We are in a castle, and know not at what hour it may be besieged; but when the soothing voice of Christ comes across our perturbation, it is hushed for ever. A merchant in Antwerp loaned Charles V. a vast sum of money, taking for it a bond. One day this Antwerp merchant invited Charles V. to dine with him, and while they were seated at the table, in the presence of the guests, the merchant had a fire built on a platter in the centre of the table. Then he took the bond which the King had given him for the vast sum of money, and held it in the blaze until it was consumed, and the king congratulated himself, and all the guests congratulated the king. There was gone at last the final evidence of his indebtedness. Mortgaged to God, we owe a debt we can never pay; but God invites us to the Gospel feast, and in the fires of crucifixion agony he puts the last record of our indebtedness, and it is consumed forever. It was so in the case of the dying thief expiring in dark despair, with the judgment to come staring him in the face, and the terrors of hell laying hold of his soul. He had faith in the Crucified One, and his faith won for him an immediate entrance into paradise.

Oh, to have all the sins of our past forgiven, and to have all possible security for the future—is not that enough to make a man happy? What makes that old Christian so placid? Most of his family lie in the village cemetery. His health is undermined. His cough will not let him sleep at night. From the day he came to town and he was a clerk, until this the day of his old age, it has been a hard fight for bread. Yet how happy he looks. Why? It is because he feels that the same God who watched him when he lay in his mother's arms is watching him in the time of old age, and unto God he has committed all his dead, expecting after a while to see them again. He has no anxiety whether he go this summer or next summer—whether he be carried out through the snowbanks or through the daisies. Fifty years ago, he learned that all this world could give was ashes, and he reached up and took the fruits of eternal life. You see his face is very white now. The crimson currents of life seem to have departed from it; but under that extreme whiteness of the old man's face is the flash of the day-break. There is only one word in all our language that can describe his feelings, and that is the word that slipped off the angel's harp above Bethlehem —peace! And so there are hundreds of souls here to-night who have felt this Almighty comfort. Their reputation was pursued; their health shattered; their home was almost if not quite broken up; their fortune went away from them. Why do they not sit down and give it up? Ah, they have no disposition to do that. They are saying while I speak: "It is my Father that mixed this bitter cup, and I will cheerfully drink it. Everything will be explained after awhile. I shall not always be under the harrow. There is something that makes me think I am almost home. God will yet wipe away all tears from my eyes." So say these bereft parents. So say these motherless children. So say a great many in this house to-night.

Now, am I not right in these circumstances, in trying to persuade this entire audience to give up ashes and take bread? To give up the unsatisfactory things of this world, and take the glorious things of God and eternity? Why, my friends, if you kept this world as long as it lasts, you would have, after awhile, to give it up. There will be a great fire breaking out from the sides of the hills; there will be falling flame, and ascending flame; in it the earth will be overwhelmed. Fires burning from within, out; fires burning from above, down; this earth will be a furnace, and then it will be a living coal, and then it will be an expiring ember, and the thick clouds of smoke will lessen and lessen until there will be only a faint vapor curling up from the ruins, and then the very last spark of the earth will go out. And I see two angels meeting each other over the gray pile, and as one flits past, he cries, "Ashes!" and the other, as he sweeps down the immensity, will respond, "Ashes!" while all the infinite spaces will echo and re-echo, "Ashes! ashes! ashes!"

Oh, God forbid that you and I should choose such a mean portion. My fear is, not that you will not see the superiority of Christ to this world, but that, through some dreadful infatuation, you will relegate to the future that which God, and angels, and churches militant and triumphant declare that you ought to do now. My brother, I do not say that you will go out of this world by the stroke of a horse's hoof, or that you will fall through a hatchway, or that a plank may slip from an insecure scaffolding and dash your life out, or that a bolt may fall on you from an August thunder-storm; but I do say that, in the vast majority of cases, your departure from the world will be wonderfully quick; and I want you to start on the right road before that crisis has plunged.

A Spaniard, in a burst of temper, slew a Moor. Then the Spaniard leaped over a high wall and met a gardener, and told him the whole story; and the gardener said: "I will make a pledge of confidence with you. Eat this peach and that will be a pledge that I will be your protector to the last." But, oh, the sorrow and surprise of the gardener when he found out that it was his own son that had been slain! Then he came to the Spaniard and said to him: "You were cruel, you ought to die, you slew my son, and yet I took a pledge with you, and I must keep my promise; and so he took the Spaniard to the stables and brought out the swiftest horse. The Spaniard sprang upon it and put many miles between him and the scene of crime, and perfect escape was effected.

We have, by our sins, slain the Son of God. Is there any possibility of our rescue? Oh, yes. God the Father says to us: "You had no business, by your sin, to slay my Son, Jesus; you ought to die, but I have promised you deliverance. I have made you the promise of eternal life, and you shall have it. Escape now for thy life." And to-night I act merely as the Lord's groom, and I bring you out to the King's stables, and I tell you to be quick and mount, and away. In this plain you perish, but housed in God you live. Oh, you pursued and almost overtaken one, put on more speed. Eternal salvation is the price of your velocity. Fly! fly! lest the black horse outrun the white horse, and the battle-axe shiver the helmet and crash down through the insufficient mail. In this tremendous exigency of your immortal spirit beware, lest you prefer ashes to bread!

CHAPTER XXXII.

KEEPING BAD COMPANY.

A companion of fools shall be destroyed.—Proverbs xiii: 20.

On the nights of city exploration I found that hardly any young man came to places of dissipation alone. Each one was accompanied. No man goes to ruin alone. He always takes some one else with him.

"May it please the Court," said a convicted criminal, when asked if he had anything to say before sentence of death was passed upon him—"may it please the Court, bad company has been my ruin. I received the blessings of good parents, and, in return, promised to avoid all evil associations. Had I kept my promise, I should have been saved this shame, and been free from the load of guilt that hangs round me like a vulture, threatening to drag me to justice for crimes yet unrevealed. I, who once moved in the first circles of society, and have been the guest of distinguished public men, am lost, and all through bad company."

This is but one of the thousand proofs that the companion of fools shall be destroyed. It is the invariable rule. There is a well man in the wards of a hospital, where there are a hundred people sick with ship fever, and he will not be so apt to take the disease as a good man would be apt to be smitten with moral distemper, if shut up with iniquitous companions.

In olden times prisoners were herded together in the same cell, but each one learned the vices of all the culprits, so that, instead of being reformed by incarceration, the day of liberation turned them out upon society beasts, not men.

We may, in our places of business, be compelled to talk to and mingle with bad men; but he who deliberately chooses to associate himself with vicious people, is engaged in carrying on a courtship with a Delilah, whose shears will clip off all the locks of his strength, and he will be tripped into perdition. Sin is catching, is infectious, is epidemic. I will let you look over the millions of people now inhabiting the earth, and I challenge you to show me a good man who, after one year, has made choice and consorted with the wicked. A thousand dollars reward for one such instance. I care not how strong your character may be. Associate with horse-thieves, you will become a horse-thief. Clan with burglars, and you will become a burglar. Go among the unclean, and you will become unclean. Not appreciating the truth of my text, many a young man has been destroyed. He wakes up some morning in the great city, and knows no one except the persons into whose employ he has entered.

As he goes into the store all the clerks mark him, measure him, and discuss him. The upright young men of the store wish him well, but perhaps wait for a formal introduction, and even then have some delicacy about inviting him into their associations. But the bad young men of the store at the first opportunity approach and offer their services. They patronize him. They profess to know all about the town. They will take him anywhere that he wishes to go—if he will pay the expenses. For if a good young man and a bad young man go to some place where they ought not, the good young man has invariably to pay the charges. At the moment the ticket is to be paid for, or the champagne settled for, the bad young man feels around in his pockets and says, "I have forgotten my pocket-book." In forty-eight hours after the young man has entered the store the bad fellows of the establishment slap him on the shoulder familiarly; and, at his stupidity in taking certain allusions, say, "My young friend, you will have to be broken in;" and they immediately proceed to break him in. Young man, in the name of God I warn you to beware how you let a bad man talk familiarly with you. If such an one slap you on the shoulder familiarly, turn round and give him a withering look, until the wretch crouches in your presence. There is no monstrosity of wickedness that can stand unabashed under the glance of purity and honor. God keeps the lightnings of heaven in his own scabbard, and no human arm can wield them; but God gives to every young man a lightning that he may use, and that is the lightning of an honest eye. Those who have been close observers of city life will not wonder why I give warning to young men, and say, "Beware of bad company."

First, I warn you to shun the skeptic—the young man who puts his fingers in his vest and laughs at your old-fashioned religion, and turns over to some mystery of the Bible, and says, "Explain that, my pious friend; explain that." And who says, "Nobody shall scare me; I am not afraid of the future; I used to believe in such things, and so did my father and mother, but I have got over it." Yes, he has got over it; and if you sit in his company a little longer, you will get over it too. Without presenting one argument against the Christian religion, such men will, by their jeers and scoffs and caricatures, destroy your respect for that religion, which was the strength of your father in his declining years, and the pillow of your old mother when she lay a-dying.

Alas! a time will come when that blustering young infidel will have to die, and then his diamond ring will flash no splendor in the eyes of Death, as he stands over the couch, waiting for his soul. Those beautiful locks will be uncombed upon the pillow; and the dying man will say, "I cannot die—I cannot die." Death standing ready beside the couch, says, "You must die; you have only half a minute to live; let me have it right away—your soul." "No," says the young infidel, "here are my gold rings, and these pictures; take them all." "No," says Death, "What do I care for pictures!—your soul." "Stand back," says the dying infidel. "I will not stand back," says Death, "for you have only ten seconds now to live; I want your soul." The dying man says, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room. O God!" "Hush," says Death; "you said there was no God." "Pray for me," exclaims the expiring infidel. "Too late to pray," says Death; "but three more seconds to live, and I will count them off—one—two—three." He has gone! Where? Where? Carry him out—out, and bury him beside his father and mother, who died while holding fast the Christian religion. They died singing; but the young infidel only said, "Don't breathe that cold air into my face. You crowd me too hard. It is getting dark in the room."

Again, I urge you to shun the companionship of idlers. There are men hanging around every store, and office and shop, who have nothing to do, or act as if they had not. They are apt to come in when the firm are away, and wish to engage you in conversation while you are engaged in your regular employment. Politely suggest to such persons that you have no time to give them during business hours. Nothing would please them so well as to have you renounce your occupation and associate with them. Much of the time they lounge around the doors of engine houses, or after the dining hour stand upon the steps of a fashionable hotel or an elegant restaurant, wishing to give you the idea that that is the place where they dine. But they do not dine there. They are sinking down lower and lower, day by day. Neither by day nor by night have anything to do with the idlers. Before you admit a man into your acquaintance ask him politely, "What do you do for a living?" If he says, "Nothing; I am a gentleman," look out for him. He may have a very soft hand, and very faultless apparel, and have a high-sounding family name, but his touch is death. Before you know it, you will in his presence be ashamed of your work dress. Business will become to you drudgery, and after awhile you will lose your place, and afterwards your respectability, and last of all your soul. Idleness is next door to villainy. Thieves, gamblers, burglars, shop-lifters, and assassins are made from the class who have nothing to do. When the police go to hunt up and arrest a culprit they seldom go to look in at the busy carriage factory, or behind the counter where diligent clerks are employed, but they go among the groups of idlers. The play is going on at the theater, when suddenly there is a scuffle in the top gallery. What is it? A policeman has come in, and, leaning over, has tapped on the shoulder of a young man, saying, "I want you, sir." He has not worked during the day, but somehow has raked together a shilling or two to get into the top gallery. He is an idler. The man on his right hand is an idler, and the man on his left hand is an idler.

During the past few years there has been a great deal of dullness in business. Young men have complained that they have little to do. If they have nothing else to do they can read and improve their minds and hearts. These times are not always to continue. Business is waking up, and the superior knowledge that in this interregnum of work you may obtain will be worth fifty thousand dollars of capital. The large fortunes of the next twenty years are having their foundations laid this winter by the young men who are giving themselves to self-improvement. I went into a store in New York and saw five men, all Christians, sitting round, saying that they had nothing to do. It is an outrage for a Christian man to have nothing to do. Let him go out and visit the poor, or distribute tracts, or go and read the Bible to the sick, or take out his New Testament and be making his eternal fortune. Let him go into the back office and pray.

Shrink back from idleness in yourself and in others, if you would maintain a right position. Good old Ashbel Green, at more than eighty years of age, was found busy writing, and some young man said to him: "Why do you keep busy? It is time for you to rest?" He answered: "I keep busy to keep out of mischief." No man is strong enough to be idle.

Are you fond of pictures? If so I will show you one of the works of an old master. Here it is: "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and lo! it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall was broken down. Then I saw and considered well. I looked upon it and received instruction. Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep. So shall thy poverty come as one that traveleth and thy want as an armed man." I don't know of another sentence in the Bible more explosive than that. It first hisses softly, like the fuse of a cannon, and at last bursts like a fifty-four pounder. The old proverb was right: "The devil tempts most men, but idlers tempt the devil."

A young man came to a man of ninety years of age and said to him: "How have you made out to live so long and be so well?" The old man took the youngster to an orchard, and, pointing to some large trees full of apples, said: "I planted these trees when I was a boy, and do you wonder that now I am permitted to gather the fruit of them?" We gather in old age what we plant in our youth. Sow to the wind and we reap the whirlwind. Plant in early life the right kind of a Christian character, and you will eat luscious fruit in old age, and gather these harvest apples in eternity.

Again: I urge you to avoid the perpetual pleasure-seeker. I believe in recreation and amusement. I need it as much as I need bread, and go to my gymnasium with as consciencious a purpose as I go to the Lord's Supper; and all persons of sanguine temperament must have amusement and recreation. God would not have made us with the capacity to laugh if he had not intended us sometimes to indulge it. We will go forth from the festivities of coming holidays better prepared to do our work. God hath hung in sky, and set in wave, and printed on grass many a roundelay; but he who chooses pleasure-seeking for his life work does not understand for what God made him. Our amusements are intended to help us in some earnest mission. The thunder-cloud hath an edge exquisitely purpled, but with voice that jars the earth, it declares, "I go to water the green fields." The wild-flowers under the fence are gay, but they say, "We stand here to make room for the wheat-field, and to refresh the husbandmen in their nooning." The stream sparkles and foams, and frolics, and says, "I go to baptize the moss. I lave the spots on the trout. I slake the thirst of the bird. I turn the wheel of the mill. I rock in my crystal cradle muckshaw and water-lily." And so, while the world plays, it works. Look out for the man who always plays and never works.

You will do well to avoid those whose regular business it is to play ball, skate or go a-boating. All these sports are grand in their places. I never derived so much advantage from any ministerial association, as from a ministerial club that went out to play ball every Saturday afternoon in the outskirts of Philadelphia. These recreations are grand to give us muscle and spirits for our regular toil. I believe in muscular Christianity. A man is often not so near God with a weak stomach as when he has a strong digestion. But shun those who make it their life occupation to sport. There are young men whose industry and usefulness have fallen overboard from the yacht on the Hudson or the Schuylkill. There are men whose business fell through the ice of the skating pond, and has never since been heard of. There is a beauty in the gliding of a boat, in the song of skates, in the soaring of a well-struck ball, and I never see one fly but I involuntarily throw up my hands to catch it; and, so far from laying an injunction upon ball-playing, or any other innocent sport, I claim them all as belonging of right to those of us who toil in the grand industries of church and state.

But the life business of pleasure-seeking always makes in the end a criminal or a sot. George Brummell was smiled upon by all England, and his life was given to pleasure. He danced with peeresses, and swung a round of mirth, and wealth, and applause, until exhausted of purse, and worn out of body, and bankrupt of reputation, and ruined of soul, he begged a biscuit from a grocer, and declared that he thought a dog's life was better than a man's.

Such men will crowd around your anvil, or seek to decoy you off. They will want you to break out in the midst of your busy day to take a ride with them to Coney Island or to Central Park. They will tell you of some people you must see; of some excursion that you must take; of some Sabbath day that you ought to dishonor. They will tell you of exquisite wines that you must take; of costly operas that you must hear; of wonderful dancers that you must see; but before you accept their convoy or their companionship, remember that while at the end of a useful life you may be able to look back to kindnesses done, to honorable work accomplished, to poverty helped, to a good name earned, to Christian influence exerted, to a Savior's cause advanced—these pleasure-seekers on their death-bed have nothing better to review than a torn play-bill, a ticket for the races, an empty tankard, and the cast-out rinds of a carousal; and as in the delirium of their awful death they clutch the goblet, and press it to their lips, the dregs of the cup falling upon their tongue, will begin to hiss and uncoil with the adders of an eternal poison.

Cast out these men from your company. Do not be intimate with them. Always be polite. There is no demand that you ever sacrifice politeness. A young man accosted a Christian Quaker with, "Old chap, how did you make all your money?" The Quaker replied, "By dealing in an article that thou mayest deal in if thou wilt—*civility*." Always be courteous, but at the same time firm. Say *no* as if you meant it. Have it understood in store, and shop, and street that you will not stand in the companionship of the skeptic, the idle, the pleasure-seeker.

Rather than enter the companionship of such, accept the invitation to a better feast. The promises of God are the fruits. The harps of heaven are the music. Clusters from the vineyards of God have been pressed into the tankards. The sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty are the guests. While, standing at the banquet, to fill the cups and divide the clusters, and command the harps, and welcome the guests, is a daughter of God on whose brow are the blossoms of Paradise, and in whose cheek is the flush of celestial summer. Her name is Religion.

> Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
> And all her paths are peace."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE PRINCESS IN DISGUISE.

And the Lord said unto Abijah: Behold, the wife of Jeroboam cometh to ask a thing of thee for her son, for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her: for it shall be when she cometh in, that she shall feign herself to be another woman.—I. Judges xiv: 5.

There is a very sick child in Jeroboam's palace in Tirzah. Medicines have failed. Skill is exhausted. Abijah, the young prince, who had already become very popular, must die, unless some supernatural aid be afforded. Death comes up the palace-stairs and swings open the sick-room of royalty, and stands looking upon the wasted form of the young prince, holding over him a dart with which to strike. Wicked Jeroboam the father has no right to expect Divine interference. He knows if he pleads with the Lord's prophet, he will get nothing but condemnation, and so Jeroboam sends his wife on the tender and solemn mission. She put aside her princely apparel, and puts on the attire of a peasant-woman, and instead of taking gold and gems, as she might have done, as a present to the prophet, she takes only those things which would seem to indicate that she belonged to the peasantry, namely, ten loaves of bread and cracknels, and a cruse of honey.

Yonder she goes, hooded and disguised, the first woman of all the realm, on foot, unattended, carrying a burden as though she had come out from one of the humblest homes in Tirzah. People carelessly pass her on the road, not knowing that she is the first woman in all the realm, the heiress of a kingdom, and that those who are bespangled and robed with royalty are her daily associates. Peter the Great, the Czar of all the Russias, at work on the dry dock at Saardam, with a sailor's hat and a shipwright's axe, was not more thoroughly disguised than this woman of Tirzah on her way to seek the healing blessing of the prophet in Shiloh. But the Lord's messenger might not thus be deceived. Divinely illumined, although he had lost his physical eyesight—divinely illumined, he sees right through that woman's cheat, and as this great lady enters his door, he accosts her in the words: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam. Why feignest thou thyself to be another? For I am sent to thee with heavy tidings. Get thee to thy house, and when thy feet reach the gate of the city the child shall die." Broken-hearted, the woman goes back to her home, now not so careful to hide her face, or her noble gait and bearing. Her tears fall on the dust of the way, and her mourning fills all the road from Shiloh to Tirzah. What overwhelming grief! for she knows that every step she takes is one heart-beat less in the life of her child. With wonderful precision every word of the prophet is fulfilled. As the woman goes in the gate of the city, the child's life passes out. No sooner have her feet struck the gate, than the pulses of the son cease. The cry of sorrow in the palace is joined by the wailing of a nation, and as this yonthful Abijah is carried out to his grave, the land sends up its voice in eulogy of departed virtue, and the air is rent with the lamentation of a kingdom.

It is with no small or insignifiant idea that this morning I ask you to consider the thrilling story of this disguised Princess of Tirzah.

In the first place, I see that *wickedness is disposed to involve others*—to make them its dupes, its allies, its scapegoats. Jeroboam wanted to hoodwink the prophet

Did he go himself? No, he sent his wife to do the work. Hers the peril of detection, the hardship of the way, the execution of the plot, while he stayed at home in indolence, waiting for his wicked scheme to be carried out. Iniquity, though a brag, is a great coward. It contrives sin, but leaves others to execute it ; it lays the train of gunpowder, but wants somebody else to touch it off; plans the mischief, gets somebody else to work it; invents the lie, gets somebody else to circulate it. In nearly all the great plots of wickedness that have been discovered, it has been found out that the instigators of the rapine, or the arson, or the murder, went free, while those who were suborned and inveigled into the crime, clanked the chain and mounted the gallows. Aaron Burr, with a heart unsurpassed for impurity and ambition, plots for the usurpation of the United States Government, but gets off with a little censure and a few threats, while Blennerhasset—sweet-tempered Blennerhasset, learned Blennerhasset—whom he decoyed from his gardens, and vineyards, and laboratories, on the banks of the Ohio, and hoodwinked into his crime, is hurled into prison, and his great fortune is scattered, and his family, brought up in luxury, turned out to die. Benedict Arnold, scheming for the surrender of the American forts, and the destruction of the American army, and the overthrow of the American nation, for the betrayal of our cause gets his purse filled with pounds sterling, and becomes a brigadier-general in the opposing army; while Major Andre, the brave and the brilliant, whom he duped into the conspiracy, suffers the gibbet on the banks of the Hudson. Nine-tenths of those who are arraigned, incarcerated, and condemned, are merely the satellites of some adroit villain. Ignominious fraud is a juggler, which, by sleight of hand and legerdemain, makes the money it stole appear to be in somebody else's pocket. When there is any great wickedness to be achieved, when there is any great prophet to be hoodwinked, Jeroboam, instead of going himself, sends his wife to do it. Stand off from imposition and chicanery. Let not vile men employ you for the purpose of carrying out their iniquities.

Again, I learn from this thrilling story of the disguised Princess of Tirzah, that *royalty sometimes passes in disguise.* The frock, the hood, the veil of the country-woman, hid up the majesty of this princess or queen, and as she passed along the road, no one suspected who she was. Yet she was just as much a princess or a queen under the country-woman's garb, as when wearing the apparel which flashed through the palace. So God now often puts upon imperial natures a crown, yet we do not discover them. They make no display. They wear no insignia of royalty. They blow no trumpet. They ride in no high places. They elicit no huzza. They quote no foreign language. Royalty in mask. A princess in disguise.

There are kings without the crown, and conquerors without the palm, and empresses without the jewels. That plain woman you passed on the street to-day may be regnant over vast realms of goodness and virtue—a dominion wider than Jeroboam saw from the window of his palace. You look in upon a home of poverty and destitution. No clothes. No fire. No bread. Long story of suffering written on the mother's wasted hand, and on the pale cheeks of the children, and on the empty bread-tray, and on the fireless hearth, and on the broken chair. You would not give a dollar for all the furniture in the house. Yet God, by his grace, may have made that woman a princess or a queen. The overseers of the poor talk over her case, and pronounce her a pauper. They know not that God has burnished a coronet for her wrinkled brow, and that there is a throne on which at last she will rest from earthly weariness. Glory veiled! Affluence hidden! Eternal raptures hushed up! Majesty in a mask! A princess in disguise!

I will tell you of a grander disguise. Hear it. The favorite of a great house one day looked out of his palace window and saw men carrying very heavy burdens, and some of them lying at the gate full of sores, and some hobbling on crutches, and heard others bewailing their woe; and he said: "I will put on poor-man's clothes, and I will go down among those destitute ones, and I will be one of them, and I will see what I can do in the way of sympathy and help." The day was set. The lords of the land came to see him off. All who could sing gathered together to give him a parting song, which shook the hills and woke up the shepherds. The first few nights of his life he slept with the ostlers, and drovers, and camel-drivers, for no one knew there was a King in town. He strolled into the house where learned men sat, and amazed them, that one without a doctor's gown should know more about the law than the doctors. He fished with the fisherman. He smote with his own hammer in the carpenter's shop. He ate raw corn out of the field. He fried his own fish on the banks of Gennesaret. He slept out of doors, because the mountaineers would not invite him into their cabin. He was howled at by crazy people amid the tombs. He was splashed by the surf of the sea. A pilgrim without a pillow. A sick man without any medicament. A mourner without any sympathetic bosom into which he could pour his tears. Through all that land he passed in disguise. Occasionally his Divine royalty would flash out, as in the Genessaret storm; as in the red wine at the wedding; as when he freed the shackled demoniacs of Gaddera; as when he swung a whole school of fish into the net of the discouraged boatmen; as when he throbbed life into the wasted arm of the paralytic; but, still, for the most part he passed in disguise. No one saw a king's jewel in his sandal. No one saw a king's robe in his plain coat. They knew not that that shelterless man owned all the mansions in which the hierarchs of heaven have their habitation. They knew not that he who cried: "I thirst!" poured the Euphrates from his own chalice. They knew not that that hungered man owned all the olive gardens and all the harvests that shook their gold on the hills of Palestine. They knew not that the worlds that lighted up the Eastern night were only the glittering belt with which he clasped the robes of his glory. They knew not that the ocean lay in the palm of his hand, like a dew-drop in the vase of a lily. They knew not that all the splendors of the noonday were only the shadow of his throne. They knew not that suns, and moons, and stars, and galaxies, marching on for ages in cohorts of light, as compared with Christ's lifetime, were less than the sparkle of a fire-fly on a summer's night. Omnipotence sheathed in a human form! Omniscience hidden in a human eye! Infinite love concealed in a human heart! Eternal harmonies subdued into a human voice! Honor cloaked in shame! The crown of universal dominion covered up by a bunch of thorns! The royalty of heaven passing in earthly disguise!

Again, I learn from this story of the disguised Princess of Tirzah, *how people put masks on, and how the Lord tears them off.* Oh, it must have been terrible when the prophet accosted this woman of Tirzah, and said: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam. You cannot cheat me. I know who you are. Come in. Why feignest thou to be the wife of another?" It was right for her to seek a cure for her sick son; but it was not right that she should try to hoodwink the prophet. It was a wicked cheat, and God tore off the mask. Sometimes we have a right to conceal. There is no need of telling everything. A man is a fool who tells everything he knows. There is a natural pressure to the lips which indicates that sometimes we ought to be silent. But for all double dealing, and Jesuitry, and moral shuffling, and forgery, and sham, God has nothing but exposure and anathema. He will show up the trap. He will riddle the empiricism. He will assault the ambuscade. He will rip up the cheat. I wish I could point out to you some of the charlatans and tricksters that hoodwink, and cajole, and cozen, and hoax society. There is a vast multitude of people over-credulous. They are ready to be deceived. They believe in ghosts; they saw one of them once. They heard strange and unaccountable sounds in a vacant dwelling. Passing a graveyard at night they saw something in white approach and cross the road. In a neighbor's house they heard something that portended a death in the family. They think it is very disastrous to count the carriages at a funeral. They think it is a certain sign of evil if a bat flies into a room on a summer night, or a salt-cellar upsets, or a cricket chirps on the hearth, or if they see the moon over the wrong shoulder. They would not think of beginning any enterprise on Friday, or of going back to the house to get anything after they had once started on a journey. Now, such people are all ready to be duped. Ignorance comes along in the disguise of medical science, and these are the kind of people that this disguised ignorance first entraps. Oh, the tragedy of the pill-box and the mixtures that have never been described. It is high time that somebody lifted up his voice against the wholesale butchery of the race. There are so many men who have found the essence of a weed which was plucked in some strange place in the moonshine, that can cure all kinds of disease, and they cover up the board fences with the advertisements of the "elixirs," and the "pain killers," and the "Indian mixtures," and the supernatural bitters, and the nostrums which are emptying cradles, and filling insane asylums, and choking the cemetery with more bones than it can swallow! And so ears are deafened, and eyes are blinded, and nervous systems are destroyed by "electrical salves," and "instantaneous ointments," and "irresistible cataplasms," and "unfailing disinfectants," and the wonders of therapeutics, and the prodigies of pharmacy, and the marvels of chirurgery, enough to stun, electrify, poultice, scarify and kill the whole race Oh, stand off from such impositions. When ignorance comes to you in the form of medical science—when it comes to you in that or in any other disguise, have nothing to do with it. Men prosper by these things, and build up vast fortunes; but after awhile, if they have been practicing on the weaknesses of men and women, the time will come when their prosperity will cease, and their dapple greys will be halted by the angel of the Lord that stood before the ass with drawn sword. In the day of the Lord, there will be a light which will shine through every subterfuge, and thinner than the disguise of the woman of Tirzah will be every earthly imposition, and with a voice louder than that with which the prophet accosted that woman, saying: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam," will he consign to midnight darkness, and doom, and death all two-faced men, and jockies, and knaves, and defrauders, and imposters, and charlatans.

Again, I learn, from this story of the disguised princess of Tirzah, *how exact, and minute, and precise are the Providences of God.* The prophet told that woman that the moment she entered the gate of the city, the child would die. She comes up to the gate of the city, the child's pulses instantly stop. With what wonderful precision that Providence acted. But it was no more certainly true in her life than it is true in your life and mine. Sickness comes, death occurs, the nation is born, despotisms are overthrown at the appointed time. God drives the universe with a stiff rein. Events do not go slipshod. Things do not merely happen so. With God there are no disappointments, no surprises, no accidents. The designs of God are never caught in *deshabille.* In all the Book of God's Providence there is not one "if." I am far from being a fatalist, but I would be wretched indeed if I did not suppose that God arranges everything that pertains to me and mine; and as when that woman entered the gate of Tirzah and her son died, the providence was minutely arranged, just so minutely and precisely are all the affairs of our life arranged. You may ask me a hundred questions I cannot answer about this theory, nor can any man answer them; but I shall believe until the day of my death that no pang ever seized me but God decides when it shall come and when it shall go, and that I am over-arched by unerring care, and that though the heavens may fall, and the earth may burn, and the judgment may thunder, and eternity may roll, if I am God's child, not so much as a hair shall fall from my head, or a shadow drop on my path, or a sorrow transfix my heart, but to the very last particular it shall be under my Father's arrangement. He bottles our tears. He catches our sighs. And to the orphan he will be a father, and to the widow he will be a husband, and to the outcast he will be a home, and to the poorest wretch that to-day crawls out of the ditch of his abominations, crying for mercy, he will be an all-pardoning Redeemer. The rocks will turn grey with age, the forests will be unmoored in the hurricane, the sun will shut its fiery eyelid, the stars will drop like blasted figs, the sea will heave its last groan and lash itself in expiring agony, the continents will drop like anchors in the deep, the world will wrap itself in sheet of flame and leap on the funeral pyre of the judgment day; but God's love will never die. It shall kindle its suns after all other lights have gone out. It will be a billowing sea after all other oceans have wept themselves away. It will warm itself by the blaze of a consuming world. It will sing while the archangel's trumpet peals and the air is filled with the crash of breaking sepulchers and the rush of the wings of the rising dead.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HELP FOR THOSE OFF TRACK.

When shall I awake? I will seek it yet again.—Proverbs xxiii: 35

I have thought in the midst of this series of sermons which I am preaching, on the night side of city life, it would be well for me to address a sermon of help to the multitude of people who have got on the wrong track. In the nights of my exploration I found a great multitude of men who had gone astray, and nothing more impressed me than the fact of their great multitude. With an insight into human nature such as no other man ever reached, Solomon, in my text, sketches the mental operations of one who, having stepped aside from the path of rectitude, desires to return. With a wish for something better, he says: "When shall I awake? When shall I come out of this horrid nightmare of iniquity?" But seized upon by uneradicated habit, and forced down hill by his passions, he cries out: "I will seek it yet again. I will try it once more."

Our libraries are adorned with an elegant literature addressed to young men, pointing out to them all the dangers and perils of life—complete maps of the voyage, showing all the rocks, the quicksands, the shoals. But suppose a man has already made shipwrecks; suppose he is already off the track; suppose he has already gone astray, how is he to get back? That is a field comparatively untouched. I propose to address myself this morning to such. There are those in this audience who, with every passion of their agonized soul, are ready to hear such a discussion. They compare themselves with what they were ten years ago, and cry out from the bondage in which they are incarcerated. Now, if there be any in this house, come with an earnest purpose, yet feeling they are beyond the pale of Christian sympathy, and that the sermon can hardly be expected to address them, then, at this moment, I give them my right hand and call them brother. Look up. There is glorious and triumphant hope for you yet. I sound the trumpet of Gospel deliverance. The church is ready to spread a banquet at your return, and the hierarchs of heaven to fall into line of bannered procession at the news of your emancipation. So far as God may help me, I propose to show what are the obstacles of your return, and then how you are to surmount those obstacles.

The first difficulty in the way of your return is the force of moral gravitation. Just as there is a natural law which brings down to the earth anything you throw into the air, so there is a corresponding moral gravitation. In other words, it is easier to go down than it is to go up; it is easier to do wrong than it is to do right. Call to mind the comrades of your boyhood days — some of them good, some of them bad. Which most affected you? Call to mind the anecdotes that you have heard in the last five or ten years—some of them are pure and some of them impure. Which the more easily sticks to your memory? During the years of your life you have formed certain courses of conduct—some of them good, some of them bad. To which style of habit did you the more easily yield? Ah! my friends, we have to take but a moment of self-inspection to find out that there is in all our souls a force of moral gravitation. But that gravitation may be resisted. Just as you may pick up from the earth something and hold it in your hand toward heaven, just so, by the power of God's grace, a soul fallen may be lifted toward peace, toward pardon, toward heaven. Force of moral gravitation in every one of us, but power in God's grace to overcome that force of moral gravitation.

The next thing in the way of your return is the power of evil habit. I know there are those who say it is very easy for them to give up evil habits. I do not believe them. Here is a man given to intoxication. He knows it is disgracing his family, destroying his property, ruining him body, mind, and soul. If that man, being an intelligent man and loving his family, could easily give up that habit, would he not do so? The fact that he does not give it up proves it is hard to give it up. It is a very easy thing to sail down stream, the tide carrying you with great force; but suppose you turn the boat up stream, is it so easy then to row it? As long as we yield to the evil inclinations in our hearts, and our bad habits we are sailing down stream; but the moment we try to turn, we put our boat in the rapids just above Niagara, and try to row up stream. Take a man given to the habit of using tobacco, as most of you do! and let him resolve to stop, and he finds it very difficult. Seventeen years ago I quit that habit, and I would as soon dare to put my right hand in the fire as once to indulge in it. Why? Because it was such a terrific struggle to get over it. Now, let a man be advised by his physician to give up the use of tobacco. He goes around not knowing what to do with himself. He cannot add up a line of figures. He cannot sleep nights. It seems as if the world had turned upside down. He feels his business is going to ruin. Where he was kind and obliging, he is scolding and fretful. The composure that characterized him has given way to a fretful restlessness, and he has become a complete fidget. What power is it that has rolled a wave of woe over the earth and shaken a portent in the heavens? He has tried to stop smoking! After a while he says: "I am going to do as I please. The doctor doesn't understand my case. I'm going back to my old habit." And he returns. Everything assumes its usual composure. His business seems to brighten. The world becomes an attractive place to live in. His children, seeing the difference, hail the return of their father's genial disposition. What wave of color has dashed blue into the sky, and greenness into the mountain foliage, and the glow of sapphire into the sunset? What enchantment has lifted a world of beauty and joy on his soul? He has gone back to smoking. Oh! the fact is, as we all know in our own experience, that habit is a taskmaster; as long as we obey it, it does not chastise us; but let us resist and we find we are to be lashed with scorpion whips, and bound with ship cable, and thrown into the track of bone-breaking Juggernauts. During the war of 1812 there was a ship set on fire just above Niagara Falls, and then, cut loose from its moorings, it came on down through the night and tossed over the falls. It was said to have been a scene brilliant beyond all description. Well, there are thousands of men on fire of evil habit, coming down through the rapids and through the awful night of temptation toward the eternal plunge. Oh! how hard it is to arrest them. God only can arrest them. Suppose a man after five, or ten, or twenty years of evil-doing resolves to do right? Why, all the forces of darkness are allied against him. He cannot sleep nights. He gets down on his knees in the midnight and cries, "God help me!" He bites his lip. He grinds his teeth. He clenches his fist in a determination to keep his purpose. He dare not look at the bottles in the window of a wine store. It is one long, bitter, exhaustive, hand-to-hand fight with enflamed, tantalizing, and merciless habit. When he thinks he is entirely free the old inclinations pounce upon him like a pack of hounds with their muzzles tearing away at the flanks of one poor reindeer. In Paris there is a sculptured representation of Bacchus, the god of revelry. He is riding on a panther at full leap. Oh! how suggestive. Let every one who is speeding on bad ways understand he is not riding a docile and well-broken steed, but he is riding a monster wild and bloodthirsty, going at a death leap. How many there are who resolve on a better life, and say, "When shall I awake?" but, seized on by their old habits, cry, "I will try it once more; I will seek it yet again!" Years ago, there were some Princeton students who were skating and the ice was very thin, and some one warned the company back from the air-hole, and finally warned them entirely to leave the place. But one young man with bravado, after all the rest had stopped, cried out, one round more!" He swept around, and went down, and was brought out a corpse. My friends, there are thousands and tens of thousands of men losing their souls in that way. It is the one round more.

I have also to say that if a man wants to return from evil practices, society repulses him. Desiring to reform, he says: "Now, I will shake off my old associates, and I will find Christian companionship." And he appears at the church door some Sabbath day, and the usher greets him with a look as much as to say, "Why, you here? You are the last man I ever expected to see at church! Come, take this seat right down by the door!" Instead of saying, "Good morning; I am glad you are here. Come; I will give you a first-rate seat, right up by the pulpit." Well, the prodigal, not yet discouraged, enters a prayer meeting, and some Christian man, with more zeal than common sense, says: "Glad to see you; the dying thief was saved, and I suppose there is mercy for you!" The young man, disgusted, chilled, throws himself back on his dignity, resolved he never will enter the house of God again. Perhaps not quite fully discouraged about reformation, he sides up by some highly respectable man he used to know, going down the street, and immediately the respectable man has an errand down some other street! Well, the prodigal wishing to return, takes some member of a Christian association by the hand, or tries to. The Christian young man looks at him, looks at the faded apparel and the marks of dissipation, and instead of giving him a warm grip of the hand, offers him the tip end of the long fingers of the left hand, which is equal to striking a man in the face. Oh! how few Christian people understand how much force and gospel there is in a good, honest hand-shaking. Sometimes, when you have felt the need of encouragement, and some Christian man has taken you heartily by the hand, have you not felt thrilling through every fiber of your body, mind and soul an encouragement that was just what you needed? You do not know anything at all about this unless you know when a man tries to return from evil courses of conduct he runs against repulsions innumerable. We say of some man, he lives a block or two from the church, or half a mile from the church. There are people in Brooklyn and New York who live a thousand miles from church. Vast deserts of indifference between them and the house of God. The fact is, we must keep our respectability, though thousands and tens of thousands perish. Christ sat with publicans and sinners. But if there came to the house of God a man with marks of dissipation upon him, people almost threw up their hands in horror, as much as to say, "Isn't it shocking?" How these dainty, fastidious Christians in all our churches are going to get into heaven, I don't know, unless they have an especial train of cars, cushioned and upholstered, each one a car to himself! They cannot go with the great herd of publicans and sinners. Oh! ye who curl your lip of scorn at the fallen, I tell you plainly, if you had been surrounded by the same influences, instead of sitting to-day amid the cultured, and the refined and the Christian, you would have been a crouching wretch in stable or ditch, covered with filth and abomination. It is not because you are naturally any better, but because the mercy of God has protected you. Who are you that, brought up in Christian circles and watched by Christian parentage, you should be so hard on the fallen?

I think men also are often hindered from return by the fact that churches are too anxious about their membership and too anxious about their denomination, and they rush out when they see a man about to give up his sin and return to God, and ask him how he is going to be baptized, whether by sprinkling or immersion, and what kind of church he is going to join. Oh! my friends, it is a poor time to talk about Presbyterian catechisms, and Episcopal liturgies, and Methodist love feasts and baptistries to a man that is coming out of the darkness of sin into the glorious light of the gospel. Why, it reminds me of a man drowning in the sea, and a life-boat puts out for him, and the man in the boat says to the man out of the boat, "Now, if I get you ashore, are you going to live on my street?" First get him ashore, and then talk about the non-essentials of religion. Who cares what church he joins, if he only joins Christ and starts for heaven? Oh! you ought to have, my brother, an illumined face and a hearty grip for every one that tries to turn from his evil way. Take hold of the same book with him though his dissipations shake the book, remembering that he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins.

Now, I have shown you these obstacles because I want you to understand I know all the difficulties in the way; but I am now to tell you how Hannibal may scale the Alps, and how the shackles may be unriveted, and how the paths of virtue forsaken may be regained. First of all, my brother, throw yourself on God. Go to him frankly, and earnestly, and tell him these habits you have, and ask him if there is any help in all the resources of omnipotent love, to give it to you. Do not go with a long rigmarole people call prayer, made up of "ohs," and "ahs," and "forever and forever, amens!" Go to God and cry for help! help! help! and if you cannot cry for help, just look and live. I remember, in the late war, I was at Antietam, and I went into the hospitals after the battle and I said to a man, "Where are you hurt?" He made no answer, but held up his arm, swollen and splintered. I saw where he was hurt. The simple fact is, when a man has a wounded soul, all he has to do is to hold it up before a sympathetic Lord and get it healed. It does not take any long prayer. Just hold up the wound. Oh, it is no small thing when a man is nervous, and weak and exhausted, coming from his evil ways, to feel that God puts two omnipotent arms around about him, and says: "Young man, I will stand by you. The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but I will never fail you." And then as the soul thinks the news is too good to be true, and cannot believe it, and looks up in God's face, God lifts his right hand and takes an oath, an affidavit, saying: "As I live saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." Blessed be God for such a gospel as this. "Cut the slices thin," said the wife to the husband, "or there will not be enough to go all around for the children; cut the slices thin." Blessed be God there is a full loaf for every one that wants it. Bread enough and to spare. No thin slices at the Lord's table. I remember when the Master Street Hospital, in Philadelphia, was opened during the war, a telegram came saying, "There will be three hundred wounded men to-night; be ready to take care of them;" and from my church there went in some twenty or thirty men and women to look after these poor wounded fellows. As they came, some from one part of the land, some from another, no one asked whether this man was from Oregon, or from Massachusetts, or from Minnesota, or from New York. There was a wounded soldier, and the only question was how to take off the rags the most gently, and put on the bandage, and administer the cordial. And when a soul comes to God, He does not ask where you came from, or what your ancestry was. Healing for all your wounds. Pardon for all your guilt. Comfort for all your troubles.

Then, also, I counsel you, if you want to get back, to quit all your bad associations. One unholy intimacy will fill your soul with moral distemper. In all the ages of the church there has not been an instance where a man kept one evil associate and was reformed. Among the twelve hundred thousand of the race, not one instance. Go home to-day, open your desk, take out letter paper, stamp an envelope, and then write a letter something like this:

"*My Old Companions:* I start this day for heaven. Until I am persuaded you will join me in this, farewell."

Then sign your name, and send the letter with the first post. Give up your bad companions or give up heaven. It is not ten bad companions that destroy a man, nor five bad companions, nor three bad companions, nor two bad companions, but one. What chance is there for that young man I saw along the street, four or five young men with him, halting in front of a grogshop, urging him to go in, he resisting, violently resisting, until after a while they forced him to go in! It was a summer night and the door was left open, and I saw the process. They held him fast, and they put the cup to his lips, and they forced down the strong drink. What chance is there for such a young man?

I counsel you also, seek Christian advice. Every Christian man is bound to help you. If you find no other human ear willing to listen to your story of struggle, come to me and I will by every sympathy of my heart, and every prayer, and every toil of my hand, stand beside you in the struggle for reformation; and as I hope to have my own sins forgiven and hope to be acquitted at the judgment seat of Christ, I will not betray you. First of all, seek God, then seek Christian counsel. Gather up all the energies of body, mind, and soul, and, appealing to God for success, declare this day everlasting war against all drinking habits, all gaming practices, all houses of sin. Half-and-half work will amount to nothing; it must be a Waterloo. Shrink back now and you are lost. Push on, and you are saved. A Spartan general fell at the very moment of victory, but he dipped his finger in his own blood and wrote on a rock near which he was dying, "Sparta has conquered." Though your struggle to get rid of sin may seem to be almost a death struggle, you can dip your finger in your own blood and write on the Rock of Ages, "Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." Oh! what glorious news it would be for some of these young men to send home to their parents in the country these holidays which are coming. They go to the postoffice every day or two to see whether there are any letters from you. How anxious they are to hear! You might send them for a holiday present this season, a book from one of our best publishing houses, or a complete wardrobe from the importer's palace—it would not please them half so much as the news you might send home to-morrow that you had given your heart to God. I know how it is in the country. The night comes on. The cattle stand under the rack through which burst the trusses of hay. The horses just having frisked up from the meadow at the nightfall, stand knee-deep in the bright straw that invites them to lie down and rest. The perch of the hovel is full of fowl, their feet warm under the feathers. In the old farmhouse at night no candle is lighted, for the flames clap their hands about the great backlog, and shake the shadow of the group up and down the wall. Father and mother sit there for half an hour, saying nothing. I wonder what they are thinking of. After a while the father breaks the silence and says, "Well, I wonder where our boy is in town to-night;" and the mother answers, "In no bad place, I warrant you; we always could trust him when he was home, and since he has been away there have been so many prayers offered for him we can trust him still." Then at eight o'clock—for they retire early in the country—at eight o'clock they kneel down and commend you to that God who watches in country and in town, on the land and on the sea. Some one said to a Grecian general, "What was the proudest moment in your life?" He thought a moment, and said, "The proudest moment in my life was when I sent word home to my parents that I had gained the victory." And the proudest and most brilliant moment in your life will be the moment when you can send words to your parents in the country that you have conquered your evil habits by the grace of God, and become eternal victor. Oh! despise not parental anxiety. The time will come when you will have neither father nor mother, and you will go around the place where they used to watch you and find them gone from the house, and gone from the field and gone from the neighborhood. Cry as loud for forgiveness as you may over the mound in the churchyard, they will not answer. Dead! Dead! And then you will take out the white lock of hair that was cut from your mother's brow just before they buried her, and you will take the cane with which your father used to walk, and you will think and think, and wish that you had done just as they wanted you to, and would give the world if you had never thrust a pang through their dear old hearts. God pity the young man who has brought disgrace on his father's name. God pity the young man who has broken his mother's heart. Better if he had never been born,—better if in the first hour of his life, instead of being laid against the warm bosom of maternal tenderness, he had been coffined and sepulchred. There is no balm powerful enough to heal the heart of one who has brought parents to a sorrowful grave, and who wanders about through the dismal cemetery, rending the hair and wringing the hands, and crying, "Mother! mother!" Oh! that to-day, by all the memories of the past, and by all the hopes of the future, you would yield your heart to God. May your father's God and your mother's God be your God forever.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE REPROACHFUL OUTCRY.

No man cared for my soul.—Psalm cxlii: 4.

David, the rubicund lad, had become the battle-worn warrior. Three thousand armed men in pursuit of him, he had hidden in the cave of Engedi, near the coast of the Dead Sea. Utterly fagged out with the pursuit, as you have often been worn out with the trials of life, he sat down and cried out: "No man cared for my soul!"

If you should fall through a hatchway, or slip from a scaffolding, or drop through a skylight, there would be hundreds of people who would come around and pick up your body and carry it to the home or to the hospital. I saw a great crowd of people in the street and I asked: "What is the matter?" and I found out that a poor laboring man had fallen under sunstroke, and all our eyes were filled with tears at the thought of his distracted wife and his desolated home. We are all sympathetic with physical disaster, but how little sympathy for spiritual woes. There are men in this house who have come to mid-life who have never yet been once personally accosted about their eternal welfare. A great sermon dropped into an audience of hundreds of thousands will do its work; but if this world is ever to be brought to God it will be through little sermons preached to private Christians to an audience of one. The sister's letter postmarked at the village—the word uttered in your hearing, half of smiles and half of tears—the religious postscript to a business letter—the card left at the door when you had some kind of trouble—the anxious look of some one across a church aisle while an earnest sermon was being preached, swung you into the kingdom of God. But there are hundreds of people in this house who will take the word that David used in the past tense, and employ it in the present tense and cry out: "No man *cares* for my soul!" You feel as you go out day by day in the tug and jostle of life that it is every man for himself. You can endure the pressure of commercial affairs, and would consider it almost impertinent for any one to ask you whether you are making or losing money. But there have been times when you would have drawn your cheque for thousands of dollars if some one would only help your soul out of its perplexities. There are questions about your higher destiny that ache, and distract, and agonize you at times. Let no one suppose that because you are busy all day with hardware, or dry-goods, or groceries, or grain, that your thoughts are no longer than your yard-stick, and stop at the brass-headed nails of the store counter. Where you speak once about religious things you think five thousand times. They call you a worldling. You are not a worldling. Of course you are industrious and keep busy, but you have had your eyes opened to the realities of the next world. You are not a fool. You know better than any one can tell you that a few years at most will wind up your earthly engagements, and that you will take residence in a distant sphere where all your business adroitness would be a superfluity. You sometimes think till your head aches about great religious subjects. I see you going down the street with your eyes fixed on the pavement, oblivious of the passing multitudes, your thoughts gone on eternal expedition. You wonder if the Bible is true, how much of it is literal and how much is figurative, if

Christ be God, if there is anything like retribution, if you are immortal, if a resurrection will ever take place, what the occupation of your departed kindred is, what you will be ten thousand years from now. With a cultured placidity of countenance you are on fire with agitations of soul. Oh, this solitary anxiety of your whole lifetime. You have sold goods to or bought them from Christian people for ten years, and they have never whispered one word of spiritual counsel. You have passed up and down the aisles of churches with men who knew that you had no hope for heaven, and talked about the weather, and about your physical health, and about everything but that concerning which you most wanted to hear them speak, namely, your everlasting spirit. Times without number you have felt in your heart, if you have not uttered it with your lips: "No man cares for my soul!"

There have been times when you were especially pliable on the great subject of religion. It was so, for instance, after you had lost your property. You had a great many letters blowing you up for being unfortunate. You showed that there had been a concatenation of circumstances and that yonr insolvency was no fault of yours. Your creditors talked to you as though they would have a hundred cents on a dollar or your life. Protest after protest tumbled in on your desk. Men who used to take your hand with both of theirs and shake it violently, now pass you on the street with an almost imperceptible nod. After six or eight hours of scalding business anxiety you go home, and you shut the door, and throw yourself on the sofa, and you feel in a state of despair. You wish that some one would come in and break up the gloom. Everything seems to be against you. The bank against you. Your creditors against you. Your friends, suddenly become critical, against you. All the past against you. All the future against you. You make reproachful outcry: "No man cares for my soul!"

There was another occasion when all the doors of your heart swung open for sacred influences. A bright light went out in your household. Within three or four days, there were compressed sickness, death, obsequies. You were so lonely that a hundred people coming into the house, did not break up the solitariness. You were almost killed with the domestic calamity. A few formal, perfunctory words of consolation were uttered on the stairs before you went to the grave; but you wanted some one to come and talk over the whole matter, and recite the alleviations, and decipher the lessons of the dark bereavement. No one came. Many a time you could not sleep until two or three o'clock in the morning, and then your sleep was a troubled dream, in which was re-enacted all the scene of sickness, and parting, and dissolution. Oh! what days and nights they were! No man seemed to care for your soul.

There was another occasion when your heart was very susceptible. There was a great awakening. There were hundreds of people who pressed into the kingdom of God; some of them acquaintances, some business associates, yes, perhaps some members of your own family were baptized by sprinkling or immersion. Christian people thought of you and they called at your store, but you were out on business! They stopped at your house, you had gone around to spend the evening. They sent a kindly message to you; somehow, by accident, you did not get it. The life-boat of the Gospel swept through the surf and everybody seemed to get in but you. Everything seemed to escape you. One touch of personal sympathy would have pushed you into the kingdom of God. When on communion-day, your friends went in and your sons and daughters went into the church, you buried your face in your handkerchief and sobbed: "Why am I left out? Everybody seems to get saved but me. No man cares for my soul."

Hearken to a revelation I have to make. It is a startling statement. It will so surprise you that I must prove it as I go on. Instead of this total indifference all about you, in regard to your soul, I have, to-night, to tell you that heaven, earth, and hell are after your immortal spirit. Earth to cheat it. Hell to destroy it. Heaven to redeem it. Although you may be a stranger to the thousands of Christians in this house, their faces would glow and their hearts would bound if they saw you make one step heavenward. So intricate and far-reaching is this web of sympathy that I could by one word rouse a great many prayers in your behalf. No one care for your soul! Why one signal of distress on your part, would thrill this audience with holy excitement. If a boat in New York harbor should get in distress, from the men-of-war, and from the sloops, and from the steamers, the flying paddles would pull to the rescue. And if to-night, you would lift one signal of distress, all these voyagers of eternity would bear down toward you and bring you relief. But no. You are like a ship on fire at sea. They keep the hatches down, and the captain is frenzied, and he gives orders that no one hail the passing ships. He says: "I shall either land this vessel in Hamburg, or on the bottom of the ocean, and I don't care which." Yonder is a ship of the White Star Line passing. Yonder one of the National Line. Yonder one of the Cunard Line. Yonder one of the Inman Line. But they know not there is any calamity happening on that one vessel. Oh! if the captain would only put his trumpet to his lip, and cry out: "Lower your boats! Bear down this way! We are burning up! Fire! Fire!" No. No. No signal is given. If that vessel perishes, having hailed no one, whose fault will it be? Will it be the fault of the ship that hid its calamity, or will it be the fault of the vessels that, passing on the high seas, would have been glad to furnish relief, if it had been only asked? In other words, my brother, if you miss heaven, it will be your own fault. I could to-night bring a thousand souls who would kneel beside you and not get up until your sins are pardoned and your sorrows assuaged.

No one care for your soul! Why in all the ages there have been men whose entire business was soul-saving. In this work, Munson went down under the knives of the cannibals whom he had come to save, and Robert McCheyne preached himself to death by thirty years of age, and John Bunyan was thrown into a dungeon in Bedfordshire, and Jehudi Ashman endured all the malarias of the African jungle, and there are hundreds and thousands of Christian men and women now who are praying, toiling, preaching, living, dying to save souls.

No one care for your soul! Have you heard how Christ feels about it? I know it was only five or six miles from Bethlehem to Calvary—the birth-place and the death-place of Christ—but who can tell how many miles it was from the throne to the manger? How many miles down, how many miles back again? The place of his departure was the focus of all splendor and pomp. All the thrones facing his throne. His name the chorus in every song, and the inscription on every banner. His landing-place a cattle-pen, malodorous with unwashed brutes, and dogs growling in and out of the stable. Born of a weary mother who had journeyed eighty miles in severe unhealth that she might find the right place for the Lord's nativity—born, not as other princes, under the flash of a chandelier, but under a lantern swung by a rope to the roof of the barn. In that place Christ started to save you. Your name, your face, your time, your eternity, in Christ's mind. Sometimes traveling on mule's back to escape old Herod's massacre, sometimes attempting nervous sleep on the chilly hill-side, sometimes earning his breakfast by the carpentry of a plough. In Quarantania the stones of the field, by their shape and color, looking like the loaves of bread, tantalizing his hunger. Yet all the time keeping on after you. With drenched coat treading the surf of Genessaret. Howled after by a blood-thirsty mob. Denounced as a drunkard. Mourning over a doomed city, while others shouted at the site of the shimmering towers. All the time coming on and coming on to save you. Indicted as being a traitor against government, perjured witnesses swearing their souls away to ensure his butchery. Flogged, spit on, slapped in the face, and then hoisted on rough lumber, in the sight of earth, and heaven, and hell, to purchase your eternal emancipation. From the first infant step to the last step of manhood on the sharp spike of Calvary, a journey for you. Oh, how he cared for your soul! By dolorous arithmetic add up the stable, the wintry tempest, the midnight dampness, the abstinence of forty days from food, the brutal Sanhedrim, the heights of Golgotha, across which all the hatreds of earth, and all the furies of hell, charged with their bayonets, and then dare to say again that no one cares for your soul.

A young man might as well go off from home and give his father and mother no intimation as to where he has gone, and, crossing the seas, sitting down in some foreign country, cold, sick, and hungry, and lonely, saying: "My father and mother don't care anything about me." Do not care anything about him! Why, that father's hair has turned grey since his son went off. He has written to all the consuls in the foreign ports, asking about that son. Does not the mother care anything about him? He has broken her heart. She has never smiled since he went away. All day long, and almost all night, she keeps asking: "Where is he? Where can he be?" He is the first thought in her prayer and the last thought in her prayer—the first thought in the morning and the last at night. She says: "O God, bring back my boy; I must see him again before I die. Where is he! I must see him before I die!" Oh, do not his father and mother care for him? You go away from your Heavenly Father, and you think he does not care for you because you will not even read the letters by which he invites you to come back, while all heaven is waiting, and waiting, and waiting for you to return. A young man said to his father: "I am going off; I will write to you at the end of seven years and tell you where I am." Nine years have passed along since that son went away, and, for the last two years, the father has been going to the depot in the village, on the arrival of every train, and when he hears the whistle in the distance he is thrilled with excitement, and he waits until all the passengers have come out, and then he waits until the train has gone clear out of sight again, and then he goes home, hastening back to the next train; and he will be at every train until that son comes back, unless the son waits until the father be dead. But, oh, the greater patience of God. He has been waiting for you, not seven years, not nine years, but, for some of you, twenty years, thirty years, forty years, fifty years—

waiting, calling—waiting, calling, until nothing but omnipotent patience could have endured it. O my brother, do not take the sentiment of my text as your sentiment. We do care for your soul. I care for it. For that reason I give up all other themes and take this call of grace. I would like to-night to marshal a great host of invitations all around about you, and then command them to close up until it would be impossible for your soul to escape from the gracious environment. I have tried something of this religion. I know something of its peace, something of its good cheer, something of its glorious anticipations, and I commend it to you. Oh, come in by Christ, the good old way. Crowd all this path to heaven to-night with immortals. Why are you down there in the wilderness? Do you like husks better than bread? Do you like troughs better than chalices? Do you like fiends better than angels? Do you like hell better than heaven? Oh, come in by Christ, the living way.

A few Sabbath nights ago, a young man appeared in this room at the end of the platform, and he said to me: "I have just come off the sea." I said: "When did you arrive?" Said he: "I came into port this afternoon. I was in a great 'blow' off Cape Hatteras this last week, and I thought that I might as well go to heaven as to hell. I thought the ship would sink; but, sir, I never very seriously thought about my soul until to-night." I said to him: "Do you feel that Christ is able and willing to save you?" "Oh, yes," he replied, "I do." "Well," I said; "Now are you willing to come and be saved by him?" "I am," he said. "Well, will you now, in the prayer we are about to offer, give yourself to God for time and eternity?" "I will," he said. Then we knelt in prayer, and after we had got through praying, he told me that the great transformation had taken place. I could not doubt it. He is on the sea to-night. I do not know what other port he may gain or lose, but I think he will gain the harbor of heaven.

> "Star of peace, beam o'er the billow,
> Bless the soul that sighs for Thee;
> Bless the sailor's lonely pillow,
> Far, far at sea."

It was sudden conversion with him that night. Oh that it might be sudden conversion with you to-night. God can save you in one moment as well as he can in a century. There are sudden deaths, sudden calamities, sudden losses. Why not sudden deliverances? God's Spirit is infinite in speed. He comes here with omnipotent power, and he is ready here and now, instantaneously and for ever, to save your soul. I believe that a multitude of you will to-night come to God. I feel you are coming, and you will bring your families and your friends with you. They have heard in heaven already of the step you are about to take. The news has been cried along the golden streets, and has rung out from the towers: "A soul saved! A soul saved!" But there is some one here to-night who will reject this Gospel. He will stay out of the kingdom of God himself. He will keep his family and his friends out. It is a dreadful thing for a man just to plant himself in the way of life, then keep back his children, keep back his companion in life, keep back his business partners—refuse to go into heaven himself, and refuse to let others go in. To-night I have set before you life and death, and there are some here who have chosen death, and this sermon, and the call of God's Holy Spirit, so far as their rescue is concerned, is a failure.

A young man, at the close of a religious service, was asked to decide the matter of his soul's salvation. He said: "I will not do it to-night." Well, the Christian man kept talking with him, and he said: "I insist that to-night, you either take God or reject Him." "Well," said the young man, "if you put it in that way, I will reject him. There now, the matter's settled." On his way home on horseback, he knew not that a tree had fallen aslant the road, and he was going at full speed, and he struck the obstacle and dropped lifeless. That night his Christian mother heard the riderless horse plunging about the barn, and mistrusting something terrible was the matter, she went out and came to the place where her son lay, and she cried out: "O Henry, dead and not a Christian. O my son! my son! dead and not a Christian. O Henry, Henry, dead and not a Christian." God keep us from such a catastrophe!

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE VACANT CHAIR.

Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be **empty.—I. Sam. xx : 18.**

Set on the table the cutlery and the chased silver-ware of the palace, for King Saul will give a state dinner to-day. A distinguished place is kept at the table for his son-in-law, a celebrated warrior, David by name. The guests, jeweled and plumed, come in and take their places. When people are invited to a king's banquet, they are very apt to go. But before the covers are lifted from the feast, Saul looks around and finds a vacant seat at the table. He says within himself, or perhaps audibly, "What does this mean? Where is my son-in-law? Where is David the great warrior? I invited him, I expected him. What! a vacant chair at a king's banquet!" The fact was that David, the warrior, had been seated for the last time at his father-in-law's table. The day before Jonathan, had coaxed David to go and occupy that place at the table, saying to David, in the words of my text, "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty." The prediction was fulfilled. David was missed. His seat was empty. That one vacant chair spoke louder than all the occupied chairs at the banquet. In almost every house the articles of furniture take a living personality. That picture—a stranger would not see anything remarkable either in its design or execution, but it is more to you than all the pictures of the Louvre and the Luxembourg. You remember who bought it, and who admired it. And that hymn-book—you remember who sang out of it. And that cradle—you remember who rocked it. And that Bible—you remember who read out of it. And that bed—you remember who slept in it. And that room—you remember who died in it. But there is nothing in all your house so eloquent and so mighty voiced as the vacant chair. I suppose that before Saul and his guests got up from this banquet there was a great clatter of wine-pitchers, but all that racket was drowned out by the voice that came up from the vacant chair at the table. Millions have gazed and wept at John Quincy Adams's vacant chair in the House of Representatives, and at Mr. Wilson's vacant chair in the vice-presidency, and at Henry Clay's vacant chair in the American Senate, and at Prince Albert's vacant chair in Windsor Castle, and at Thiers's vacant chair in the councils of the French nation; but all these chairs are unimportant to you as compared with the vacant chairs in your own household. Have these chairs any lessons for us to learn? Are we any better men and women than when they first addressed us?

First, I point out to you the father's vacant chair. Old men always like to sit in the same place and in the same chair. They somehow feel more at home, and sometimes when you are in their place and they come into the room, you jump up suddenly and say, "Here, father, here's your chair." The probability is it is an armchair, for he is not so strong as he once was, and he needs a little upholding. His hair is a little frosty, his gums a little depressed, for in his early days there was not much dentistry. Perhaps a cane chair and old-fashioned apparel, for though you may have suggested some improvement, father does not want any of your nonsense. Grandfather never had much admiration for new-fangled notions. I sat at the table of one of my parishioners in a former congregation; an aged man was at the table, and his son was presiding, and the father somewhat abruptly addressed the son and said: "My son, don't now try to show off because the minister is here!" *Your* father never liked any new customs or manners; he preferred the old way of doing things, and he never looked so happy as when, with his eyes closed, he sat in the armchair in the corner. From wrinkled brow to the tip of the slippers, what placidity! The wave of the past years of his life broke at the foot of that chair. Perhaps, sometimes, he was a little impatient, and sometimes told the same story twice; but over that old chair how many blessed memories hover! I hope you did not crowd that old chair, and that it did not get very much in the way. Sometimes the old man's chair gets very much in the way, especially if he has been so unwise as to make over all his property to his children, with the understanding that they are to take care of him. I have seen in such cases children crowd the old man's chair to the door, and then crowd it clear into the street, and then crowd it into the poor-house, and keep on crowding it until the old man fell out of it into his grave. But your father's chair was a sacred place. The children used to climb up on the rungs of it for a good-night kiss, and the longer he stayed the better you liked it. But that chair has been vacant now for some time. The furniture dealer would not give you fifty cents for it, but it is a throne of influence in your domestic circle. I saw in the French palace, and in the throne room, the chair that Napoleon used to occupy. It was a beautiful chair, but the most significant part of it was the letter "N," embroidered into the back of the chair in purple and gold. And your father's old chair sits in the throne room of your heart, and your affections have embroidered into the back of that chair in purple and gold the letter "F." Have all the prayers of that old chair been answered? Have all the counsels of that old chair been practiced? Speak out! old arm chair. History tells us of an old man whose three sons were victors in the Olympic games, and when they came back, these three sons, with their garlands and put them on the father's brow, the old man was so rejoiced at the victories of his three children that he fell dead in their arms. And are you, O man, going to bring a wreath of joy and Christian usefulness, and put it on to your father's brow, or on the vacant chair, or on the memory of the one departed? Speak out! old arm chair. With reference to your father, the words of my text have been fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

I go a little further on in your house, and I find the mother's chair. It is very apt to be a rocking chair. She had so many cares and troubles to soothe that it must have rockers. I remember it well. It was an old chair, and the rockers were almost worn out, for I was the youngest, and the chair had rocked the whole family. It made a creaking noise as it moved; but there was music in the sound. It was just high enough to allow us children to put our heads into her lap. That was the bank where we deposited all our hurts and worries. Ah! what a chair that was. It was different from the father's chair; it was entirely different. You ask me how? I cannot tell; but we all felt it was different. Perhaps there was about this chair more gentleness, more tenderness, more grief when we had done wrong. When we were wayward, father scolded, but mother cried. It was a very wakeful chair. In the sick days of children, other chairs could not keep awake; that chair always kept awake — kept easily awake. That chair knew all the old lullabies and all those wordless songs which mothers sing to their sick children—songs in which all pity and compassion and sympathetic influences are combined. That old chair has stopped rocking for a good many years. It may be set up in the loft or the garret, but it holds a queenly power yet. When at midnight you went into that grog-shop to get the intoxicating draught, did you not hear a voice that said: "My son, why go in there?" And louder than the boisterous *encore* of the theatre, a voice saying, "My son, what do you here?" And when you went into the house of sin, a voice saying, "What would your mother do if she knew you were here?" And you were provoked with yourself, and you charged yonrself with superstition and fanaticism, and your head got hot with your own thoughts, and you went home and you went to bed, and no sooner had you touched the bed than a voice said: "What! a prayerless pillow? Man, what is the matter?" This: You are too near your mother's rocking chair. "Oh, pshaw!" you say. "There's nothing in that; I'm five hundred miles off from where I was born; I'm three thousand miles off from the church whose bell was the first music I ever heard." I cannot help that: you are too near your mother's rocking chair. "Oh," you say, "there can't be anything in that; that chair has been vacant a great while." I cannot help that; it is all the mightier for that; it is omnipotent, that vacant mother's chair. It whispers; it speaks; it weeps; it carols; it mourns; it prays; it warns; it thunders. A young man went off and broke his mother's heart, and while he was away from home his mother died, and the telegraph brought the son, and he came into the room where she lay and looked upon her face, and he cried out: "Oh, mother! mother! what your life could not do your death shall effect. This moment I give my heart to God." And he kept his promise. Another victory for the vacant chair. With reference to your mother, the words of my text were fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

I go on a little further; I come to the invalid's chair. What! How long have you been sick? "O! I have been sick ten, twenty, thirty years." Is it possible? What a story of endurance! There are in many families of my congregation these invalids' chairs. The occupants of them think they are doing no good in the world; but that invalid's chair is the mighty pulpit from which they have been preaching, all these years, trust in God. One day last July, on an island just off from Sandusky, Ohio, I preached, and there was a great throng of people there; but the throng did not impress me so much as the spectacle of just one face—the face of an invalid who was wheeled in on her chair. I said to her afterwards, "Madam, how long have you been prostrated?" for she was lying flat in the chair. "Oh!" she replied, "I have been this way fifteen years." I said, "Do you suffer very much?" "Oh, yes, she said, "I suffer very much; I suffer all the time; part of the time I was blind. I always suffer." "Well," I said, "can you keep your courage up?" "Oh, yes," she said, "I am happy, very happy indeed." Her face showed it. She looked the happiest of anyone on the ground. Oh! what a means of grace to the world, these invalid chairs. On that field of human suffering the grace of God gets its victory. Edward Payson the invalid, and Richard Baxter the invalid, and Robert Hall the invalid, and the ten thousand of whom the world has never heard, but of whom all heaven is cognizant. The most conspicuous thing on earth for God's eye and the eye of angels to rest on is not a throne of earthly power, but it is the invalid's chair. Oh! these men and women who are always suffering but never complaining—these victims of spinal disease and neuralgic torture and rheumatic excruciation will answer to the roll-call of the martyrs and rise to the martyr's throne, and will wave the martyr's palm. But when one of these invalid's chairs becomes vacant, how suggestive it is! No more bolstering up of the weary head. No more changing from side to side to get an easy position. No more use of the bandage and the cataplasm and the prescription. That invalid's chair may be folded up, or taken apart, or set away, but it will never lose its queenly power; it will always preach of trust in God and cheerful submission. Suffering all ended now. With respect to that invalid the words of my text have been fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

I pass on, and I find one more vacant chair. It is a high chair. It is the child's chair. If that chair be occupied, I think it is the most potent chair in all the household. All the chairs wait on it; all the chairs are turned toward it. It means more than David's chair at Saul's banquet. At any rate, it makes more racket. That is a strange house that can be dull with a child in it. How that child breaks up the hard worldliness of the place, and keeps you young to sixty, seventy, and eighty years of age! If you have no child of your own, adopt one; it will open heaven to your soul. It will pay its way. Its crowing in the morning will give the day a cheerful starting, and its glee at night will give the day a cheerful close. You do not like children? Then you had better stay out of heaven, for there are so many there they would fairly make you crazy! Only about five hundred millions of them! The old crusty Pharisees told the mothers to keep the children away from Christ. "You bother him," they said; "you trouble the Master." Trouble him! He has filled heaven with that kind of trouble. A pioneer in California says that for the first year or two after his residence in Sierra Nevada county there was not a single child in all the reach of a hundred miles. But the Fourth of July came, and the miners were gathered together, and they were celebrating the Fourth with oration and poem and a boisterous brass band; and while the band was playing an infant's voice was heard crying, and all the miners were startled, and the swarthy men began to think of their homes on the eastern coast, and of their wives and children far away, and their hearts were thrilled with homesickness as they heard the babe cry. But the music went on, and the child cried louder and louder, and the brass band played louder and louder, trying to drown out the infantile interruption, when a swarthy miner, the tears rolling down his face, got up and shook his fist, and said: "Stop that noisy band and give the baby a chance." Oh! there was pathos in it, as well as good cheer in it. There is nothing to arouse and melt and subdue the soul like a child's voice. But when it goes away from you, the high chair becomes a higher chair, and there is desolation all about you. I cannot speak from experience, thank God; but in three-fourths of the homes of my congregation there is a vacant high chair. Somehow you never get over it. There is no one to put to bed at night; no one to ask strange questions about God and heaven. Oh, what is the use of that high chair? It is to call you higher. What a drawing upward it must be to have children in heaven! And then it is such a preventative against sin. If a father is going away into sin, he leaves his living children with their mother; but if a father is going away into sin, what is he going to do with his dead children floating about him and hovering over his every wayward step. Oh, speak out, vacant high chair, and say: "Father, come back from sin; mother, come back from worldliness. I am watching you. I am waiting for you." With respect to your child, the words of my text have been fulfilled: "Thou shalt be missed, because thy seat will be empty."

My hearers, I have gathered up the voices of your departed friends this morning, and tried to intone them into one invitation upward. I set in array all the vacant chairs of your homes and of your social circle, and I bid them cry out this morning: "Time is short. Eternity is near. Take my Savior. Be at peace with my God. Come up where I am. We lived together on earth; come, let us live together in heaven." We answer that invitation. We come. Keep a seat for us as Saul kept a seat for David, but that seat shall not be empty. I have been very earnest this morning, because I realize the fact that the day will come when the pastor's chair will be empty. From this point, how often have I looked off into your friendly faces. I have seen a great many beautiful and thrilling sights, but never anything to equal what I have witnessed when in this chair. I have looked off and seen you rise for the doxology. Seated in this chair, sometimes I have greatly rejoiced at seeing multitudes come to God, and then, again, I have trembled for fear men would reject the Gospel. I wonder what this chair will testify when I have left it for the last time? Will it tell of a useful life, of an earnest ministry, of a pure Gospel? God grant it may. The most powerful sermon that is ever preached is by the vacant chair of a pastor the Sabbath after he has been carried away from it. And oh! when we are all through with this world, and we have shaken hands all around for the last time, and all our chairs in the home circle and in the outside world shall be vacant, may we be worshiping God in that place from which we shall go out no more for ever. I thank God there will be no vacant chairs in heaven.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

OUR AMERICAN CITIES.

The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.—Zechariah viii: 5.

With this one stroke of the pencil the prophet puts upon canvas the safety and the glee of the world's cities after they have been gospelized. When Christian people shall have had the courage to look upon the sins of the city, and the courage to apply the gospel to those sins, then will come the time when so entirely free from ruffianism and vagabondism will all the streets of all the cities be, that the children, without any protection of police, or any parental anxiety, shall fly kite and play ball anywhere. "The streets of the cities shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof." But before that time, oh, how much expurgation. I have laughed for six weeks to see some of the American clergy running about with their hands full of court-plaster to cover up the sins that I have been probing. A little green court-plaster for this, a little white court-plaster for that, a little blue court-plaster for something else. Ah! my friends, court-plaster can cover up, but it cannot cure. Not saying what my theory is in regard to the treatment of physical disease, in morals I am an allopathist, and I believe in giving a good stout dose to throw the ulcers to the surface, and then put on the salve of the old-fashioned gospel which Christ mixed to cure Bartimeus's blind eyes, and the young man who had fits, and the ten lepers, and the miseries of all generations.

There is no man on earth who has more exhilarant hope in regard to the moral condition and prosperity of our great American cities, but that hope is not based on apology or covering up, but upon exploration, exposure and Almighty medicament. After as thorough an examination as was possible, I come to tell you what I consider to be the moral condition of this country, as inferred from Washington, the city of official power; Boston, the city of culture; Philadelphia, the city of beautiful order; Chicago, the city of miraculous growth; New York, the city of commercial supremacy; Brooklyn, the city of homes; and soon, only stopping next Sunday to have a few words with my critics in regard to what is the mission of a minister of the gospel. As the cities go, so goes the land. Who has moral barometer mighty enough to tell the influence of Cincinnati upon Ohio, or of Baltimore upon Maryland, or of Charleston upon South Carolina, or of New Orleans upon Louisiana, or of Louisville upon Kentucky, or of San Francisco upon California? Let me feel the pulse of the cities, and I will tell you the pulse of the land. God gives to every city, as to every individual, a mission. As our physical and mental characteristics show what our personal sphere is, so topographical and historical facts show the mission of a city. Every city comes to be known for certain characteristics: Babylon for pride, Sparta for military prowess, Dresden for pictures, Rome for pontifical rule, Venice for architecture in ruins, Glasgow for shipbuilding, Edinburgh for learning, and London for being the mightiest metropolis of the world. Our American cities, of course, are younger, and therefore their characteristics are not so easily defined; but I think I have struck the right word in designation of each. Wrapped up and interlocked with the welfare and the very existence of this nation stands the city of Washington, on the

Potomac—planted there by way of compromise. At the dining-table of Alexander Hamilton it was decided that if the South would agree that the National Government should assume the State debts, then the North would agree to have the capital on the Potomac instead of on the Delaware. So the capital went from Annapolis to Philadelphia, and from Philadelphia to Trenton, and from Trenton to New York, and then passed from New York to the Potomac, where it will stay until within a century it shall be planted on the banks of the Mississippi, or the Missouri, just as soon as the nation shall find out from the law of national growth that it is better to have the hub of a wheel at the center rather than at the rim of the tire. "Well," you say, "what's all that to me?" You have just as much to do with the city of Washington as your heart has to do with your body. Washington is the heart of the nation. If it send out good blood, good national health. If it send out bad blood, bad national sickness. It is to me one of the most fascinating cities in the world, and I believe I shall show you before I get through that it has come to a higher condition of morality than it has ever before reached. It is a city of palaces. He who has seen the Treasury buildings, and the National Post-office, and the Capitol, and the departments of State, has seen the grandest triumphs of masonry, architecture, painting, and sculpture. I put the eight panels of the bronze door of the Capitol against the door of the Church of Madeleine, at Paris.

You talk about the works of the old masters. Go to Washington and see the works of the new masters: Leutz's "Westward Ho," Brumidi's frescoes, Greenough's Washington, Crawford's statue of Freedom. I put the white marble mountain of magnificence in which our Congress assembles against the Tuilleries and the

Parliament-houses of London. It is a city laid out more grandly than any city in the land. Mr. Ellicott by astronomical observations running the great boulevards from north to south, and from east to west. Every inch of its Pennsylvania avenue historical with the footsteps of Webster, and Clay, and Jackson, and Calhoun, and Washington. Hundreds of thousands of people along those streets vociferating at the inaugurations. Streets along which Charles Sumner moved out toward Mount Auburn, and Abraham Lincoln toward Springfield, the bells of the nation tolling at the obsequies, and the organs of the continent throbbing with the Dead March. City of huzza and requiem. City of patriotism and debauchery. City of national sacrifice and back pay. City of Senatorial dignity and corrupt lobby. City of Emancipation Proclamation and Credit Mobilier. City of the best men and the worst. City of Washington. Now, I have watched that city when Congress was in session, and when Congress was away. The morals of the city are fifty per cent better when Congress is away. Then, at that time, piety becomes more dominant. It is one of the woes of this country that so many national legislators leave their families at home. These distinguished men coming to Washington show the need of domestic supervisal. A man entirely absent from elevated female society is naturally a bear. Men are better at home than they are away from home. It is said that even ministers of the gospel during vacation sometimes go to the Saratoga horse-races. It is said that some members of Congress, faithful to their religious duties during vacation, during term time give the vacation to their religion. There are iniquities in Washington, however, not associated with office—iniquities that stay all the year round. Plenty of drinking establishments, plenty of hells of infamy, and the police in their attempts to keep order do not get as much encouragement as they ought from the courts and churches. On Christmas Day ten men in contest on Pennsylvania avenue, one of them shot dead, others bruised and mangled, the culprits brought before the District Attorney and let go. The sins rampant in New York and Brooklyn rampant in Washington. Two thousand dramshops and grocery stores and apothecary shops where they sell strong drink—two thousand in Washington. Twelve thousand nine hundred and eighty-three arrests during last year. Over four thousand people in that city who neither read nor write. One hundred and twenty thousand dollars of stolen property captured by the police last year. All this suggestive to every intelligent mind. Washington wants more police. The beat of each policeman in Washington and Georgetown is on an average ten miles. Only nine mounted police in that vast city, which has rushed up in population and more than doubled in nine years—rushing up from 61,000 to 131,000. But oh! what an improvement since the day when the most flourishing liquor establishments were under the National Capitol, and Congressmen and Senators went there to get inspiration before they made their speeches, and went there to get recuperation afterward. Thanks to Henry Wilson and a few men like him for the overthrow of that abomination. During the war there were one hundred gambling-houses in the city of Washington; there were over five hundred professional gamblers there. One gambling-house boasted that in one year it had cleared over half a million of dollars. During one session of Congress the keeper of a gambling-house went to the Sergeant-at-Arms at the Capitol and presented an order for the greater part of the salary of many of the members, who had lost so heavily at the faro-table that they had thus to mortgage their salaries; and if now, when there are about twenty gambling-houses remaining in the city of Washington, you should go, you would find in those places clerks of departments, book-keepers, confidential and private secretaries; and if you should go to some of the more expensive establishments, near Pennsylvania avenue and Thirteenth and Fourteenth streets, you would find in those gambling-houses members of Congress, officers of the army, gentlemen distinguished all the land over. It seems to me that the reporters of Washington are not as wide awake as our reporters or they would give to the different States of the Union the names of the places where some of their great representatives in Congress are accustomed to spend their evenings. But what a vast improvement in the morals of that city! Dueling abolished. No more clubbing of Senators for opposite opinion. Mr. Covode, of Pennsylvania, no more brandishes a weapon over the head of Barksdale of Mississippi. Grow and Heitt no more take each other by the throat. Griswold no more pounds Lyon, Lyon snatching the tongs and striking back until the two members in a scuffle roll on the floor of the great American Congress. Oh! there has been a vast improvement. Is it not a matter of great congratulation that there are to-day more thoroughly Christian men at the heads of departments of State in Washington than at any time since the foundation of the Government, and that the Queen of American society, by her simplicity of wardrobe in the White House, has put condemnation upon that extravagance of wardrobe which well-nigh shipwrecked some other administrations, and by the banishment of the wine-cup from State dinners has shown to people in this country in high position that people may be jolly and yet be sober? Whatever may be your opinion in regard to the politics of the Presidential mansion—and I know there is a great difference of opinion among you—I have to tell you that there has never been a purer White House, less rum and tobacco, more Methodist hymn-books, or a higher style of personal morality than to-day.

I came back from my observations of the city of Washington impressed with two or three things. And first, while I would not have the question of a man's being a Christian or not a Christian brought into the political contest, I do demand that every man sent to Washington, or to any other place of authority, be a man of good morals. Will you send a blasphemer, as you have sometimes? Blasphemy is an indictable offense against the State. Will you send to Washington a man to make laws who breaks laws? Will you send an atheist? How can he swear to support the Constitution of the United States when there is no solemnity in an oath if there be no God? Will you send a man who indulges in games of chance, whether the amount be $500 or five cents? No. Gambling is denounced by the statute of every State. Will you send a libertine? Then you insult every family in the United States. Before you send a man to your City Hall, or your State Legislature, or to your national council, go through him with a lighted candle and find if he swear, if he lie, if he cheat, if he dishonor the family relation, if he keep bad company. If he does let him stay at home. Scratch his name off your ticket with the blackest ink, and put on a blot after. How dare you send such a man to a Congress where John-Quincy Adams died, or to a Senate Chamber where Theodore Frelinghuysen sat, his face illumined with charity and heaven? No religious test, but a moral test, is demanded for every ballot-box in the city, State, and national elections. Years ago some men were sent to Congress—and I am sorry to say there are some of them left—who were walking charnel-houses. Nothing but a grave-digger's spade could free the world from their corruption. Some of them died of delirium tremens, and in a brothel. After they had been dead a little while, some member, for the purpose of giving a stone-cutter a lucrative job, moved that a large sum of city, State, or national funds be appropriated for building a monument. Now, I have no objections to such a monument to such a man if you put on it the right kind of epitaph and uncover it in the right way. Let the uncovering of that monument be when an August thunder-storm is approaching. Let the blocks of marble of that monument be cut in the shape of the ivory "chips" in which the deceased patriot used to gamble. On the four corners of the pedestal of the monument, cut in marble, let there be wine-cup, flask, decanter, demijohn. Then gather around for the dedication of this monument the fragments of families whom he despoiled, and let them come, and on each block of marble let them drop a bitter tear; and then when the blackest fold of that August thunder-storm has wrapped the top of the monument in darkness, and when some man high in church or State, recreant to the truth, stands there delivering the eulogium, let the black cloud open and a bolt strike into dust the monumental infamy with a thunder which shall make all our American capitals quake with the reverberation. "The name of the wicked shall rot."

Again: I came back from Washington with the impression that we need a great national religion. I do not mean a religion controlled by State officials, but I mean a religion dictated by a nation gospelized. I mean a religion mighty enough to control the morals of a nation. Old politicians will not be reformed. The undertakers must hurry up the funerals in these cases of political mortification. They will never be any better, those men. But gospelize the voters and then you will have gospelized officers of government. The pivot on which this nation turns is the ballot-box. Set that pivot on the Rock of Ages. There is only one being who can save this nation, and that is God. We talk a great deal about putting the name of God more thoroughly into the Constitution of the United States. Ah! my friends, it is not God in the Constitution that we want; it is God in the hearts of the people. That test is going to come, if not in our time, then in the time of our children. There has been a good deal of discussion of late as to whether the battle of Lookout Mountain was really fought above the clouds. General Grant says no. General Hooker says yes. We will not go into that discussion; but I tell you at the very battle in this country for ninety-eight years has been fought above the clouds, God and angels on our side. First came the war of the American revolution. That was the birth-throe that ushered this nation into life. Then came the war of 1812. That was the infantile disease through which every child must go. Then came the war of 1861. That was the great typhoid which was to revolutionize the national system; and when this nation resumed specie payments, that was the settlement of the doctor's bill! Now let the nation march on in its grand career. Lord God of Bunker Hill, out of the trenches of Gettysburg, so long leading us with pillar of fire by night, give us the pillar of cloud by day. Lord God of Joshua, bring down the walls of opposition to this nation, at the blast of the Gospel trumpet. Lord God of Daniel, move around about as amid the leonine despotisms that growl for our destruction. Lord God of our fathers, make us worthy descendants of a brave ancestry. Lord God of our children, bring forth from the cradles of the rising generation a race to do better than we, when our hand and voice are still. Then let all the rivers of this land flowing into the gulf, or into the Atlantic and Pacific seas, be rivers of salvation, and all the mountains, Olivets of truth and Pisgahs of prospect, and the mists rising from the lakes will be the incense of holy praise, and our cities will be so thoroughly evangelized that boys and girls, according to the teaching of my text, will be found playing in the streets thereof.

I learn once more, from my observation in the city of Washington, that worldly greatness is a very transitory and unsatisfactory thing. Great men, I noticed in Washington, are great only a little while. The majority of those men whom you saw there ten or fifteen years ago are either in the grave or in political disgrace. How rapidly the wheel turns! Call the roll of Jefferson's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Madison's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Monroe's Cabinet. Dead. Call the roll of Pierce's Cabinet. Dead. Of Abraham Lincoln's Cabinet, if I remember right, all dead but one, and he as good as dead. Call the roll of Grant's Cabinet. One or more of them worse than dead. The Congressional burying-ground in the city of Washington has one hundred and sixty cenotaphs planted in honor of members who died while in office; but they are only suggestive of a vaster congress departed. What is political honor in this country? As far as I can judge, it is the privilege of being away from home amid temptations that have slain the mightiest, bored to death by office-seekers, assaulted by meanest acrimony, and kicked into obscurity with your health gone when your time is out. One of the Senators of the United States dying in Flatbush Hospital, idiotic from his dissipations. One member of Congress I saw, years ago, seated drunk on the curbstone in Philadelphia, his wife trying to coax him home. A Congressman from New York, years ago, on a cold day, picked out of the Potomac, into which he had dropped through his intoxication, the only time when he ever came so near losing his life by too much cold water. Delaware had a Senator whose chief characteristic was, he was always drunk. Illinois had a Senator celebrated in the same direction. Oh! my friends—and I say this especially to the young men in my audience—there are so many temptations coming around all political honors, that before you seek them you had better see whether your morals are incorruptible. And I also point out to you the fact that American politics are most unfair to the most faithful and self-sacrificing men. I will never forgive American politics for the fact that it slew Horace Greeley. This country never saw a better patriot. His whole life given to reform, making a magnificent record for his country, all his deeds of self-sacrifice and his brilliant, intellectual achievements forgotten in one hour. There came a time when he felt that he, better than any other man in the Presidential chair, could adjust the difficulties between the sections, and while he was talking about the North and the South "clasping hands across the bloody chasm," American politics pushed him into it. When American politics did that, it committed the greatest outrage of the century and proved itself guilty of patricide in the fact that it murdered a father, and of regicide in the fact that it slew a king. Oh! young men, look not for the honors of this world; look only for the honors that come from God. They never intoxicate. They never destroy. Crowns, thrones, sceptres, dominions—will you have them? Did you ever hear Florence Rice Knox sing "The Lost Chord?" That song is founded on this beautiful idea. Some one sat at a piano or organ in reverie, fingers wandering among the keys, when she touched a chord of infinite sweetness that sent all her soul vibrating with comfort and with joy. But she kept that last chord of music only a moment. While she played she lost it, and for years she sought for that lost chord of music, but found it not. But one day she bethought herself, in a better country,—in heaven, among the minstrelsy of the saved,—she would get again that lost chord. If you have heard Florence Rice Knox sing "The Lost Chord," piano on one side, organ on the other side accompanying, then you have heard something most memorable. Our first parents in Paradise had happiness for a little while, and then missed it. Men have gone searching it through fame and applause and riches and emolument, but found it not. In all the ages it has eluded their grasp. It is the lost chord. Blessed be God, in Christ, our peace we find again, that which we could find nowhere else. He is the lost chord found. The symphony begins here amid our sorrows, which we must have comforted, and our sins, which we must have slain; but it will come to its mightiest music in the day when the baton of the eternal orchestra shall begin to swing, and we shall, like St. John in apocalyptic vision, hear the harpers harping with their harps. That will be the lost chord found.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

HOW MINISTERS ARE LIED ABOUT.

To every man his work.—Mark xiii: 34.

There are now in the world one thousand three hundred and seventy-seven millions of people, and consequently there are one thousand three hundred and seventy-seven million fields of usefulness. No individual can do the work of any one else. If a man neglect his work it is undone for ever. "To every man his work." You may not know that this is a double aniversary. It is nearly ten years since I became pastor of this church. Besides that, last Wednesday, January 7th, I was 47 years of age. This being a double aniversary, you will not be surprised if my sermon this morning is autobiographical. I started life in an old-fashioned Christian family, where they had prayers morning and night, and always asked a blessing at the table; and there was no exception to the rule, for, if my father was sick or away, my mother led, and while sometimes, when my father led, we found it hard to repress childish restlessness, there was something in the tones of my mother, and there was something in the tears which always choked her utterance before she got through with the prayer, that was irresistible. The fact is, that mothers get their hearts so wound around their children that when they think of their future, and the trials and temptations to which they may be subjected, they cannot control their emotions as easily as men do. While he had a very sympathetic nature, I never saw my father cry but once, and that was when they put the lid over my mother. Her hair was white as the snow, and her face was very much wrinkled, for she had worked very hard for us all and had had many sicknesses and bereavements. I do not know how she appeared to the world, nor what artists may have thought of her features; but to us she was perfectly beautiful. There were twelve of us children, but six of them are in heaven. I started for the legal profession with an admiration for it which has never cooled, for I cannot now walk along by a court-house, or hear an attorney address a jury, without having all my pulses accelerated and my enthusiasm aroused. I cannot express my admiration for a profession adorned with the names of Marshall, and Story, and Kent, and Rufus Choate, and John McLean. But God converted my soul and put me into the ministry by a variety of circumstances, shutting me up to that glorious profession. And what a work it is! I thank God every day for the honor of being associated with what I consider the most elevated, educated, refined, and consecrated band of men on this planet—the Christian ministry of America. I know, I think, about five thousand of them personally, and they are as near perfection as human nature ever gets to be. Some of them on starvation salaries, and with worn health and amid ten thousand disadvantages, trying to bring comfort and pardon to the race. I am proud to have my name on the roll with them, though my name may be at the very bottom of the roll, and am willing to be their servant for Jesus's sake. But we all have a work. "To every man his work." I will not hide the fact that it has been the chief ambition of my ministry to apply a religion six thousand years old to the present day—a religion of four thousand years B. C. to 1869 and 1879 A. D. So I went to work to find the oldest religion I could see. I sought for it in my Bible, and I found it in the Garden of Eden, where the serpent's head is promised a bruising by the heel of Christ. I said, "That is the religion," and I went to work to see what kind of men that religion made, and I found Joshua, and Moses, and Paul, and John the Evangelist, and John Bunyan, and John Wesley, and John Summerfield, and five hundred other Johns as good or approximate. I said: "Ah! that is the religion I want to preach—the Edenic religion that bruises the serpent's head." That is what I have been trying to do. The serpent's head must be bruised. I hate him. I never see his head but I throw something at it. That is what I have been trying to do during these courses of sermons, to bruise the serpent's head, and every time I bruised him he hissed, and the harder I bruised him the harder he hissed. You never trod on a serpent but he hissed. But I trod on him with only one foot. Before I get through I shall tread on him with both feet. If God will help me I shall bruise the oppression and the fraud and the impurity coiled up amid our great cities. Come now, God helping me, I declare a war of twenty-five years against iniquity and for Christ, if God will let me live so long. To this conflict I bring every muscle of my body, every faculty of my mind, every passion of my soul. Between here and my bed in Greenwood there shall not be an inch of retreat, or indifference, or of compromise. After I am dead, I ask of the world and of the church only one thing—not for a marble slab, not for a draped chair, not for a long funeral procession, not for a flattering ovation. A plain box in a plain wagon will be enough, if the elders of the church will stand here and say that I never compromised with evil, and always presented Christ to the people. Then let Father Pearson, if he be still alive, pronounce the benediction, and the mourners go home. I do not forget that my style of preaching and my work in general have been sometimes severely criticised by some of my clerical brethren. It has come to be understood that at installations and at dedications I shall be assailed. I have sometimes said to prominent men in my church, "Go down to such and such an installation, and hear them excoriate Talmage." And they go, and they are always gratified! I have heard that sometimes in Brooklyn, when an audience gets dull through lack of ventilation in the church, the pastor will look over toward Brooklyn Tabernacle and say something that will wake all the people up, and they will hunch each other and say, "That's Talmage!" You see, there are some ministers who want me to do just the way they do; and, as I cannot see my duty in their direction, they sometimes call me all sorts of names. Some of them call me one thing, and some call me another thing; but I think the three words that are most glibly used in this connection are "mountebanks," "sensationalism," "buffoonery," and a variety of phrases showing that some of my dear clerical brethren are not happy. Now, I have the advantage of all such critical brethren in the fact that I never assault them though they assault me. The dea souls! I wish them all the good I can think of—large audiences, $15,000 salaries, and houses full of children, and heaven to boot! I rub my hands all over their heads in benediction. You never heard me say one word against any Christian worker, and you never will. The fact is, that I am so busy in assaulting the powers of darkness that I have no time to stop and stab any of my own regiment in the back. Now, there are two ways in which I might answer some of the critical clergy. I might answer them by the same bitterness and acrimony and caricature with which some of them have assaulted me; but would that advance our holy religion? Do you not know that there is nothing that so prejudices people against Christianity as to see ministers fighting? It takes two to make a battle, so I will let them go on. It relieves them and does not hurt me! I suppose that in the war of words I might be their equal, for nobody has ever charged me with lack of vocabulary! But then, you plainly see that if I assaulted them with the same bitterness with which they assaulted me, no good cause would be advanced. There is another way, and that is by giving them kindly, loving, and brotherly advice. "Ah!" you say, "that's the way; that's the Christian way." Then I advise my critical brethren of the clergy to remember what every layman knows, whether in the church or in the world, that you never build yourself up by trying to pull anybody else down. You see, my dear critical brethren—and I hope the audience will make no response to what I am saying—you see, my dear critical brethren, you fail in two respects when you try to do that; first, you do not build yourselves up, and secondly, you do not pull anybody else down. Show me the case in five hundred years where any pulpit, or any church, has been built up by bombarding some other pulpit. The fact is, we have an immense membership in this church, and they are all my personal friends. Then, we have a great many regular attendants who are not church members, and a great many occasional attendants, from all parts of the land, and these people know that I never give any bad advice in this place, and that I always give good advice, and that God by conversion saves as many souls in this church every year as he saves in any other church. Now, my dear critical brethren of the clergy, why assault all these homes throughout the world? When you assault me, you assault them. Beside that, "to every man his work." I wish you all prosperity, critical brethren. *You*, for instance, are metaphysical. May you succeed in driving people into heaven by raising a great fog on earth. *You* are severely logical. Hook the people into glory by the horns of a dilemma. *You* are anecdotal. Charm the people to truth by capital stories well told. *You* are illustrative. Twist all the flowers of the field and all the stars of heaven into your sermon. You are classical. Wield the club of Hercules for the truth, and make Parnassus bow to Calvary. Your work is not so much in the pulpit as from house to house, by pastoral visitation. The Lord go with you as you go to take tea with the old ladies, and hold the children on your lap and tell them how much they look like their father and mother! Stay all the afternoon and evening, and if it is a damp night stay all night! All prosperity to you in this pastoral work, and may you by that means get the whole family into the kingdom of God. You will reach people I never will reach, and I will reach people you never will reach. Go ahead. In every possible way, my dear critical brethren of the clergy, will I help you. If you have anything going on in your church—lecture, concert, religious meeting—send me the notice and I will read it here with complimentary remarks, and when you call me a hard name I will call you a blessed fellow, and when you throw a brickbat at me, an ecclesiastical brickbat, then I will pour holy oil on your head until it runs clear down on your coat collar! There is nothing that so invigorates and inspires me as the opportunity to say pleasant things about my clerical brethren. God prosper you, my critical brethren of the ministry, and put a blessing on your head, and a blessing in your shoe, and a blessing in your gown—if you wear one—and a blessing before you, and a blessing behind you, and a blessing under you, and a blessing on the top of you, so that you cannot get out until you mount into heaven, where I appoint a meeting with you on the north side of the river, under the Tree of Life, to talk over the honor we had on earth of working each one in his own way. "To every man his work." We ought to be an example, my critical brethren, to other occupations. How often we hear lawyers talking against lawyers, and doctors talking against doctors, and merchants talking against merchants. You would hardly go into a store on one side of the street to get a merchant's opinion of a merchant on the other side of the street in the same line of business. We ought, in the ministry, to be examples to all other occupations. If we have spites and jealousies, let us hide them forever. If we have not enough divine grace to do it, let common worldly prudence dictate.

But during these ten years in which I have preached to you, I have not only received the criticism of the world, but I have often received its misrepresentation, and I do not suppose any man of any age escapes if he be trying to do a particular work for God and the church, It was said that Rowland Hill advertised he would on the following Sabbath make a pair of shoes in his pulpit, in the presence of his audience, and that he came into the pulpit with a pair of boots and a knife, and having shied off the top of the boots, presented the pair of shoes. It was said that Whitefield was preaching one summer day, and a fly buzzed around his head, and he said, "The sinner will be destroyed as certainly as I catch that fly." He clutched at the fly and missed it. The story goes that then he said that after all perhaps the sinner might escape through salvation! Twenty years ago the pictorials of London were full of pictures of Charles Spurgeon, astride the rail of the pulpit, riding down in the presence of the audience to show how easy it was to go into sin; and then the pictorials represented him as climbing up the railing of the pulpit to show how hard it was to get to heaven. Mr. Beecher was said to have entered his pulpit one warm day, and, wiping the perspiration from his forehead, to have said, "It's hot!" with an expletive more emphatic than devotional! Lies! Lies! All of them lies. No minister of the gospel escapes. Certainly I have not escaped! A few years ago, when I was living in Philadelphia, I came on to unite in holy marriage Dr. Boynton, the eloquent geological lecturer, with a lady of New York. I solemnized the marriage ceremony in the parlors of the Fifth Avenue Hotel. The couple made their wedding excursion in a balloon that left Central Park within the presence of five thousand people. When I got back to Philadelphia I saw in the papers that I had disgraced the holy ordinance of marriage by performing it a mile high, above the earth, in a balloon! And there are thousands of people to this day who believe that I solemnized that marriage above the clouds. About eight or nine years ago, in our chapel, at a Christmas festival one week night, amid six or eight hundred children roaring happy, with candies and oranges and corn-balls, and with the representation of a star in Christmas greens right before me, I said: "Boys, I feel like a morning star." It so happened that that phrase is to be found in a negro song, and two days afterwards it appeared over the name of a man who said he was "a member of a neighboring church," that I had the previous Sunday night, in my pulpit, quoted two or three verses from "Shoo Fly!" And, moreover, it went on to say that we sang that every

Sunday in our Sunday-school! And as it was supposed that "a member of a neighboring church" would not lie, grave editorials appeared in the prominent newspapers deploring the fact that the pulpit should be so desecrated, and that the Sabbath-schools of this country seemed to be going to ruin. Some years ago, in the New York *Independent*, I wrote an article denouncing the exclusiveness of churches, and making a plea for the working classes. In the midst of that article there were two ironical sentences, in which I expressed the disgust which some people have for anybody that works for a living. Some enemy took those two ironical sentences and sent them all around the world as my sentiments of disgust with the working classes, and a popular magazine of the country, taking those two ironical sentences as a text, went on to say that I preached every Sunday with kid gloves and swallowtail coat (!), and that I ought to remember that if I ever got to heaven I should have to be associated with the working classes, and be with the fisherman apostles, and Paul, the tent-maker. To this very day, I get letters from all parts of the earth containing little newspaper scraps, saying, "*Did* you really say that? How is it possible you can so hate the working classes? How can you make that accord with the words of sympathy you have recently been uttering in behalf of their sorrows?" A few years ago I preached a series of sermons here on good and bad amusements. There appeared a sermon as mine, denouncing all amusements, representing that all actors, play-actors, and actresses were dissolute without any exception, and that all theatrical places were indecent, and that every man who went to a theater lost his soul, and that it was wrong even to go to a zoological garden, and a sin to look at a zebra. I never preached one word of the sermon. Every word of that sermon was written in a printing office, by a man who had never seen me, or seen Brooklyn Tabernacle—every word of it except the text, and that he got by sending to another printing office. In the State of Maine a religious paper has a letter from a clergyman who says that I came into this pulpit on Sabbath morning with Indian dress, feathers on my head, and scalping-knife in my hand, and that the pulpit was appropriately adorned with arrows, and Indian blankets, and buffalo-skins; and the clergyman, in that letter, goes on, with tears, to ask, "What is the world coming to?" and asks if ecclesiastical authority somehow cannot be evoked to stop such an outrage. Why do I state these things? To stop them? Oh, no. But for public information. I do not want to stop them They make things spicy! Beside that, my enemies do more for me than my friends can. I long ago learned to harness the falsehood and abuse of the world for Christian service. I thought it would be a great privilege if I could preach the gospel through the secular press beyond these two cities. The secular press of these two cities, as a matter of good neighborhood and of home news, have more than done me justice; and I thank them for it. If they put the gospel as I preach it in their reportorial columns, I should be very mean and ungrateful if I objected to anything in the editorial colums. I have felt if this world is ever brought to God, it will be by the printing press; and while I have for many years been allowed the privilege of preaching the gospel through the religious press all around the world, I wanted to preach the gospel through the secular press beyond these cities, to people who do not go to church and who dislike churches. My enemies have given me the chance. They have told such monstrous lies about this pulpit and about this church that they have made all the world curious to know what really is said here They have opened the way before me everywhere, in all the cities of this land, so that now the best, the most conscientious, and the most leading papers of the country allow me, week by week, to preach repentance and Christ to the people. And first of all, now, I thank the secular press of these two cities for their kindness, and after that I publicly thank—for I shall never have any opportunity of doing so save this—the Boston *Herald*, the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, the Philadelphia *Press*, the *Times* of Philadelphia, the Albany *Argus*, the *Inter-Ocean* of Chicago, the *Advance* of Chicago, the *Courier-Journal* of Louisville, the *Times-Journal* of St. Louis, the *Dispatch* of Pittsburg, the Reading *Eagle*, Pennsylvania; the Henrietta *Journal*, of Texas; the *Evangel* of San Francisco, the *Telegraph* of St. John, Canada; the *Guardian* of Toronto, Canada; the *Christian Herald* of Glasgow, Scotland; the *Christian Age* of London, the *Christian Globe* of London, the *Oldham Chronicle* of Manchester, England; the Liverpool, *Protestant*, the *Southern Cross* of Melbourne, Australia; *Town and Country* of Sidney, Australia; the *Words of Grace*, of Sidney, Australia, and many others, all around the world. And I want to tell you that when I was called here to take this place, while I received the call from nineteen people, my enemies now give me the opportunity every week of preaching the gospel to between seven and eight million souls. They have made the curiosity to see and hear what I would say, and then the leading, the honorable newspapers of the country have gratified that curiosity. Go on, mine enemies! If you can afford it in your soul I can. So God makes the wrath of men to praise him, and while I thank my friends I thank my enemies.

But, while the falsehoods to which I have referred may somewhat have stirred your humor, there is a falsehood which strikes a different key, for it invades the sanctity of my home; and, when I tell the story, the fair-minded men and women and children of the land will be indignant. I will read it, so that if any one may want to copy it they can afterward. (Reading from manuscript.) It has been stated over and over again in private circles, and in newspapers hinted, until tens of thousands of people have heard the report, that sixteen or seventeen years ago I went sailing on the Schuylkill river with my wife and her sister (who was my sister in-law); that the boat capsized, and that having the opportunity of saving either my wife or her sister, I let my wife drown and saved her sister, I marrying her in sixty days! I propose to nail that infamous lie on the forehead of every villain, man or woman, who shall utter it again, and to invoke the law to help me. One beautiful morning, my own sister by blood relation, Sarah Talmage Whiteknack, and her daughter Mary, being on a visit to us in Philadelphia, I proposed that we go to Fairmount Park and make it pleasant for them. With my wife and my only daughter—she being a little child—and my sister Sarah and her daughter, I started for Fairmount. Having just moved to Philadelphia, I was ignorant of the topography of the suburbs. Passing along by the river, I saw a boat and proposed a row. I hired the boat and we got in, and not knowing anything of the dam across the river, and unwarned by the keeper of the boat of any danger, I pulled straight for the brink, suspecting nothing until we saw some one wildly waving on the shore as though there were danger. I looked back, and lo! we were already in the current of the dam. With a terror that you cannot imagine I tried to back the boat, but in vain. We went over. The boat capsized. My wife instantly disappeared and was drawn under the dam, from which her body was not brought until days after; I, not able to swim a stroke, hanging on the bottom of the boat, my niece hanging on to me, my sister Sarah clinging to the other side of the boat. A boat from shore rescued us. After an hour of effort to resuscitate my child, who was nine-tenths dead—and I can see her blackened body yet, rolling over the barrel, such as is used for restoring the drowned—she breathed again. A carriage came up, and leaving my wife in the bottom of the Schuylkill river, and with my little girl in semi-unconsciousness, and blood issuing from nostril and lip, wrapped in a shawl, on my lap, and with my sister Sarah and her child in the carriage, we rode to our desolated home. Since the world was created a more ghastly and agonizing calamity never happened. And that is the scene over which some ministers of the gospel, and men and women pretending to be decent, have made sport. My present wife was not within a hundred miles of the place. So far from being sisters, the two were entire strangers. They never heard of each other, and not until nine months after that tragedy on the Schuylkill did I even know of the existence of my present wife. Nine months after that calamity on the Schuylkill, she was introduced to me by my brother, her pastor, Rev. Goyn Talmage, now of Paramus, New Jersey. My first wife's name was Mary R. Avery, a member of the Reformed Church on Harrison street, South Brooklyn, where there are many hundreds of people who could tell the story. My present wife, I say, was not within a hundred miles of the spot. Her name was Susie Whittemore, and she was a member of the church in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, where multitudes could tell the story. With multitudes of people on the bank of the Schuylkill who witnessed my landing on that awful day of calamity, and hundreds of people within half an hour's walk of this place who knew Mary Avery, and hundreds of people in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, who knew my present wife, Susie Whittemore—what do you think, husbands and wives, fathers and mothers, editors and reporters, of a lie like that manufactured out of the whole cloth? I never have spoken of this subject before, and I never shall again; but I give fair notice that, if any two responsible witnesses will give me the name of any responsible person after this affirming this slander, I will pay the informant $100, and I will put upon the criminal vagabond, the loathsome and accursed wretch who utters it, the full force of the law.

But while I have thus referred to falsehoods and criticisms, I want to tell you that in the upturned faces of my congregation, and in the sympathy of a church always indulgent, and in the perpetual blessing of God, my ten years here in Brooklyn have been a rapture. Now, as to the future—for I am preaching my anniversary sermon—as to the future, I want to be of more service. My ideas of a sermon have all changed. My entire theology has condensed into one word, and that a word of four letters, and that word is "help." Before I select my text, when I come to this pulpit, when I rise to preach, the one thought is: How shall I help the people? And this coming year I mean, if God will give me his spirit, to help young men. They have an awful struggle, and I want to put my arm through their arm with a tight grip, such as an older brother has a right to give a younger brother, and I want to help them through. Many of them have magnificent promise and hope. I am going to cheer them on up the steps of usefulness and honor. God help the young men! I get letters every week from somebody in the country, saying: "My son has gone to the city; he is in such a bank, or store, or shop. Will you look after him? He was a good boy at home, but there are many temptations in the city. Pray for him, and counsel him." I want to help the old. They begin to feel in the way; they begin to feel neglected, perhaps. I want at the edge of the snow-bank of old age, to show them the crocus. I want to put in their hands the staff and the rod of the gospel. God bless your gray hairs. I want to help these wives and mothers in the struggle of housekeeping, and in the training of their children for God and for heaven. I want to preach a gospel as appropriate to Martha as to Mary. God help the martyrs of the kitchen, and the martyrs of the drawing-room, and the martyrs of the nursery, and the martyrs of the sewing-machine. I want to help merchants; whether the times are good or bad, they have a struggle. I want to preach a sermon that will last them all the week; when they have notes to pay, and no money to pay them with; when they are abused and assaulted. I want to give them a gospel as appropriate for Wall street, and Broadway, and Chestnut street, and State street, as for the communion table. I want to help dissipated men who are trying to reform. Instead of coming to them with a patronizing air that seems to say, "How high I am up, and how low you are down," I want to come to them with a manner which seems to say, "If I had been in the same kind of temptation I would have done worse." I have more interest in the lost sheep that bleats on the mountain than in the ninety-nine sheep asleep in the fold. I want to help the bereft. Oh! they are all around us. It seems as if the cry of orphanage and childlessness and widowhood would never end. Only last Wednesday we carried out a beautiful girl of twenty years. Fond parents could not cure her. Doctors could not cure her. Oceanic voyage to Europe could not cure her. She went out over that road over which so many of your loved ones have gone. Oh! we want comfort. This is a world of graves. God makes me the sun of consolation to the troubled. Help for one. Help for all. Help now. While this moment the sun rides mid heaven, may the eternal noon of God's pardon and comfort flood your soul.

I was reading this morning, that when Richard Baxter was preaching on a certain occasion in England, the shock of arms was heard in the distance. Twenty-five thousand men were in combat, but he went on preaching, and the audience sat and listened though they knew that a great conflict was raging. While I preach this morning, I know there is a mightier contest—all heaven and hell in battle array, contending for the mastery of your immortal spirit. Who shall have it?

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*Thirty pages are here added to correct omission in paging the illustrations.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

SENSATION VERSUS STAGNATION.

There arose no small stir about that way.—Acts xix: 23.

What was the matter? Paul had been preaching some sermons that seemed to upset everything. People wondered what he would do next. What is that great bonfire in the streets of Ephesus? Why, Paul has been preaching against the iniquities of the day until the people have brought out nine thousand dollars' worth of bad books and tumbled them into the fire. There seemed to be no end to his impertinence, for now he is assaulting the Temple of Diana, a building twice as large as St. Paul's Cathedral, London; its roof supported by columns of green jasper; its sculptured altars of Praxiteles; its paintings Parthasius, and its audience-room capable of holding fifty thousand idolators. In the month of May, when there were a great many strangers in the city, come there to buy medallion representations of that temple, Paul is thundering against it, until he completely ruins the stock of trinkets and spoils the medallion business, and the merchants gather together in a great indignation mass-meeting to denounce him, and say this thing must stop. Never before or since was there such a sensation. Paul was the great disturber of the day. He went to Iconium, and made a sensation. He went to Corinth, and made a sensation. He went to Jerusalem, and made a sensation. In other words, wherever he went, "there was no small stir about that way."

What is a sensation? Noah Webster says it is "an excited state of thought or feeling," and I cannot see anything more valuable than that, if the excitement of thought and feeling be in the right direction. But as the word "conservatism" has been twisted from its noble sense to mean a stupid do-nothingism, and as "liberalism" has been twisted from meaning generous treatment of opinions of others to mean a surrender of Christianity, so the word "sensation" has sometimes been twisted to mean everything erratic and reprehensible. But this I do declare: No one ever accomplished any good for church or State without exciting a sensation. Sensation is life. Stagnation is death. When sometimes I have been charged with making a sensation I have taken it as complimentary, and I have wished that the charge were more thoroughly true, and I promise, if God will help me, in the future I will make it more accurate!

I go on in this anniversary discourse, begun last Sabbath, and to-day speak to you chiefly of sensation versus stagnation. When I was a layman, worshiping in the pews, I noticed that religion was very often associated with dullness. I noticed in political conventions where the Governor of the State was to be nominated, all the people were wide awake; but when they came into religious assemblages where Christ was to get coronation, many were somnolent. I saw that in assemblages where financial questions were being discussed people were all attention; but when, in religious assemblages, the question was whether men should be forever mansioned or forever pauperized, there was but little alertness. I noticed in the court-room that when one man was on trial for his life, there was agitation and enthusiasm; but when in religious assemblage the eternal life of five hundred was being discussed, then there was somnolence. I noticed what every layman notices and remarks, that there is something radically wrong in the church of God at this day. In our boyhood days we tried every kind of art to keep awake in church. We ate caraway-seed, and cloves, and cinnamon, and held up one foot until it began to ache, and pinched ourselves until we were black and blue, or got stimulus from an older brother who stuck us with a pin, or saw the reproving look of some older sister that filled us with a sense of self-abnegation, until we looked up to the elders' and deacons' pew in the old Dutch church, and saw the seven sleepers (!) these consecrated men having lost their hold at the end of the second head of the discourse, and then we felt encouraged to think that, after all, there might be some chance for us when such very good men got asleep. What is the use of hiding the fact that there is more sleeping done in the churches than in any other kind of buildings? Many of our churches are great Sunday dormitories. Men who are troubled at home with insomnia and cannot sleep on the pillow at night, find in churches sometimes the needed anodyne. What morphine and chloral and pillow of hops cannot do, sometimes the sermon and the long prayer accomplish. Said the old Puritan clergyman, "And now, to be brief, eighteenthly!" Oh, how many arts to appear awake in church! You have seen men put their heads down on the pew in front, pretending they are overcome with emotion, when they are really overcome with drowsiness. I tell you if we do not keep our audiences awake, it is the fault of us, the clergy, and not the fault of the people. An old Scotch minister, preaching, saw one of his hearers sound asleep, and he said: "Donald, wake up; if you can't keep awake in any other way, take a pinch of snuff." "Ah!" said Donald, "Doctor, put the pinch of snuff in the sermon?" With all the artillery of eternity at hand if a man cannot keep his audience awake, it is because he has missed his calling. When men keep taking out their watches during religious services, it is evidence of the fact that they are bored. What would you think of a man at a banquet taking out his watch every few moments to see how soon he could stop eating a cream meringue? The gospel is a banquet, and our populations are starving for it, and their souls must have something to eat, and they have no patience with an entertainment which is all made up of napkin-ring, finger-bowl, and red tape. I put the complaint that the people do not like to come to church where it belongs. I say to the young men who are entering the ministry, if you want an audience, do as Paul did in my text—make a big stir. "There arose no small stir about that way." Men want help. Give them help, and they will come again. What do they care about the conventionalities of religion. How much of your Latin do they understand? What do they know about those sesquipedalion words that crawl through your senses like thousand-legged worms? They know that your chief anxiety is lest you lose your place in your notes. They know it is all a matter of calculation that the soap-lock curl comes down half way on your forehead, so that at the right moment you may brush it away with a hand delicate and diamonded. What do they care about your Arian controversy, when the controversy with them is how they can pay a note of $500 with $200, and how they can get comfort for the child they buried yesterday in Greenwood. I judge other people by myself. I cannot keep awake in a religious service where there is no practicality. I went into a beautiful church for worship. I sat down. The church was not only beautiful, but the singing was beautiful, the sermon was beautiful, the organ was beautiful, the minister was beautiful; but there came over me a spirit of somnolence, and I made manful resistance, and after a while I said to my companions, "No use, I can hold out no longer," and I put my head down on the pew in front, and had one of the most refreshing slumbers in all my life! I committed no sin. The man who stood there for three-quarters of an hour with posies, and didactics heavy as lead, was the criminal. As long as we stick to the mere technicalities of religion in our churches, a few people may come because it has been eternally decreed that they should come; but the great masses of the people will not come any more than they would come and sit down in an ice-house, or accept an invitation to spend an evening in the vault of a cemetery. My friends, the great battle in this country is to be fought, not between Christianity and infidelity, but it is to be fought between honest Christian sensation and putrid stagnation. Let the churches of God wake up, hoist their banners, blow the trumpet, give the battle-shout, and in twenty years the earth will be the Lord's. It is high time we brought up the cavalry. The big guns are stuck in the mud. The great danger for the church of God in this day is not sensation, but stagnation. Sensation is life. Stagnation is death. As I told you in the beginning of this discourse last Sabbath, that my first resolution had been to preach a religion six thousand years old appropriate to the present time, so I now tell you, in the second place, that it has been my resolution, God helping me, never to be dull. There is something in our health, there is something in our lack of ventilation that makes us dull. The reason that ministers are the most merciless critics in all the world is not because their hearts are any worse, but because so many of them are troubled with indigestion. The entire draft is on the nervous system, and much of their life is a sedentary life, and it is almost impossible for some of them to keep well. When I was editor of a religious newspaper and a book came in that I thought ought to be cut to pieces, I always handed it over to a clerical critic who had the worst dyspepsia, and he always cut it to pieces, and cut it to pieces enough. Let us, however, whatever the state of our health be, always fight against dullness, whether in the pew or in the pulpit—whether in the Sunday-school or in the prayer-meeting, and for that reason let us marshal all our faculties. If we have logical faculty, harness that. If imagination, harness that. If humor, harness that. If physical exuberance, harness that. There is not anything that is available, in a parlor, or on a lecturing platform, in the art of persuading people to right feeling and right action that is not appropriate for the pulpit. I shall before long preach a sermon on the sarcasm of the Bible. Elijah used it. Paul used it. Christ used it. If a man say a thing in church merely to make people laugh, he is reprehensible; but if he say a thing so strikingly true that people do laugh, that is another thing. I do not care whether they cry, or laugh, or hiss, or applaud, or get up and go out, or what they do, if they only quit sin and with fleet foot start for heaven. For this purpose we must ransack the mineral, the botanical, the agricultural, the æsthetic, the scientific, the poetic, the literary, the historical, the astronomical worlds for illustration. If we cannot get anything better than two flints, we must smite them together and strike fire. In vain the gold chasing on the hilt of the sword, if the edge of it is not sharp enough to cut. In vain the $100 rod and reel from Conroy's, with fly of gold pheasant or gray drake, if we cannot catch anything. In vain the expense of the collegiate and theological education of seven or ten years, if we get hopelessly buried in our own armor During the last war I was chaplain for a few weeks in a Pennsylvania regiment, and I was told one day that there was a cavalryman sick and wounded, and perhaps dying, in a barn four or five miles away. I walked over to see if I could be of any service to him. He asked me to take his horse, which was suffering from lack of attention, and his entire equipment up to headquarters at Hagerstown. I consented, but knew not what I was undertaking, for I had on and around me on the horse a heavy sword, a carbine, pistols, saddle-bags, and a great many other things I knew not the names of, and I was so overloaded I had to go on a slow walk and hold fast to the pommel of the McClellan saddle, and when I got half way up to headquarters the girth broke, and I went off, and it was a great job to get loaded up again. In the woods all around about there were stragglers from the Confederate army, but they did not seem at all affrighted at my warlike appearance! When I rode up to the encampment, and the boys gave three cheers for the chaplain who had been so brave as to capture a horse, my embarrassment exceeded my exhilaration. But I was then in the condition in which a multitude of us are in the ministry to-day — loaded up with equipment enough to slay Apollyon, yet we cannot wield it, and we go along on a slow walk, afraid that our system of didactic theology will fall off on one side, or our church history or homiletics will fall off on the other side—carefully guarding to keep our theology right side up, while David felled Goliath with a shepherd-boy's sling, and Shamgar slew six hundred men with an ox-goad. I believe in the day of eternity it will be found out that some backwoods Methodist minister who never had but three months' education in his life, but set all the prairies on fire with zeal for God, and in the summer preached to his audience in his shirt-sleeves, will be found to have done more for the race than some of us who have all the titles of the schools, and who wrap around us the gowns and the bands and the surplices, which are not enough to keep us from freezing to death in an ecclesiasticism twenty degrees below zero!

But I go further, and tell you in this anniversary sermon that in the decade through which we have passed I have tried to carry out the resolution of never explaining to you what I do not understand myself. I believe in God's sovereignty and man's free agency. Harmonize them I cannot. I believe God is one, and yet in three persons. How that can be I know not. I believe that Christ had in his nature the divine and the human. How they were interjoined I cannot explain. For years I tried to explain these things, but I found that the greatest undertaking of my life was to make other people understand that which was beyond my comprehension. Sometimes when I had preached on the subject and hoped that it was plainer to the people than it was to myself, and pronounced the benediction, some plain man at the foot of the pulpit would ask me a question which would confound me, and I would have to tell him I would see him some other time! Now, there are some things that I do know. Sin is wrong; that I know. Christ came to help us out of it; that I know. Christ has a sympathy compared with which fatherly and motherly compassion is cruelty; that I know. His grace is mighty for mightiest calamity; that I know. The religion of Jesus Christ kindles in the soul great expectations amounting to a supernatural glee; that I know.

That religion is a sedative to soothe all nervous perturbation, that is a stimulus to arouse inertia, that it pulls up by the root the red dahlia of war, and plants instead thereof the white lily of peace; that I know. That it hangs around the dying couch of the Christian the saffron, and orange, and purple clouds of a heavenly sunrise, and swings back the gates of glory so wide that they shiver the gates of the sepulcher; that I know. Now, knowing these things beyond all controversy, knowing them beyond all mistake, knowing them from my own experience, or from my own observation, what is the use of my taking your precious time and my precious time in telling you what I do not know? We had a great fire at my house the other day. I burned up five hundred manuscript sermons, for when I began to preach I wrote out all my sermons, word for word. In those sermons that I burned up I explained all the mysteries of religion, and the doctrine of election was as clear as a Scotch mist or a San Francisco fog. As I stood by the kitchen fire where these manuscripts were burning, I really thought they threw out more warmth than they had ever thrown out before! Really, the best thing you can do with any style of Christian work that has not warmth in it is to burn it. The pulpit and the church ought to be a great fireplace around which the people, benumbed of the cold world, can come and warm their entire nature. Stir up the fire around the great back-log and bring all the chairs up closer. There is a severe irony in the usual term descriptive of a minister's notes when they are called a minister's skeleton. Cold statements of truth are skeletons that weed round them the warmth, the life, and the eternal sympathy of Christ's gospel. There is nothing in romance or novel so enchanting as the religion of Christ, if you see it fairly; but put it down on the dissecting-table of sharp analysis and rip its heart out, and you have made it loathsome and a corpse.

Again, my dear people, in this decade in which it has been my happiness to administer to you, it has been my resolution to smite sin wherever I see it, reckless of the consequences. The reason sin triumphs in this country is because we do not call it by the right name. Ministers of the gospel were intended to be the Lord's artillerymen, and to fire away at iniquity wherever they see it, and let other people provide the ambulances. What has been the cause of the excitement over the sermons I have been preaching for the last three or four months? Because they were awfully true. You see a group of dogs fighting on the commons, and you throw a stone at them. Which one howls? The one that is hit. The worst sign of the times is that the public make so many ministers hush up. You might as well try to stop Asiatic cholera, or yellow fever at Grenada and New Orleans, by saying nothing about them. In order that I might take straighter aim at iniquity, I went and explored the dark places of our cities. The common sense of the church and of the State approved what I had done. Any man's common sense, if he allowed his common sense to come up, said: "You can not forcibly assault iniquity until you see it." But there were some who did not like the way. They thought I ought to have gone down on Brooklyn Heights, and loaded my gun with blank cartridges, and then aimed over at the Fourth ward, New York, and then turned my head the other way, and shut my eyes and pulled the trigger, and then started for South Bushwick! Because I did not do that way there were some ministers almost frantic about my exploration of city life.

They believed in the exploration of Africa by Stanley, and the exploration of the heart of the North American continent by Fremont, but were afraid of the exploration of worse heathenism within five minutes of the City Hall of Brooklyn and within five minutes of Broadway, New York. To hear some of my dear brethren talk, you would have supposed I had been the first clergyman that had ever made an exploration of underground life in our great cities. Why I could call off the names of scores of ministers and evangelists in the country who have made the same tour. The police who took me around those nights told me they had taken them around on the same rounds. I could make a big disturbance, if I had the heart, in a great many churches in Brooklyn and New York; but I never make any disturbance! The difference between my exploration and the exploration of these other dear brethren was, that they said nothing about it, except among ministerial brethren, while I uttered it in the hearing of my people, announcing the thunders of the Lord God Almighty against the crimes and warning the young men of this country to look out. The bar of God will decide which was the better plan—to look at iniquity and say nothing about it, or to look at iniquity and give the warning, not only so far as I may reach from this platform, but through these journalists, whom I shall, to the day of my death, thank for their kindness. I preached some years ago in this place, about the average American theater, and the people all over said: "Why, you are talking about the theater, the historical theater as it was two or three hundred years ago; if you want to see the theater as it is now, or know about it, go and look for yourself." I saw there was force in the criticism, and I tell you if ever I treat those subjects again I shall first personally make a tour of the theaters, and I shall see who is there and I shall see what kind of plays they have. I am done looking through other people's spectacles! God has given me two first-rate eyes, and I am going to use them. But whether I denounce sin, or commend Christ to you, my dear congregation, I will always choose the most startling and arousing theme I can find, and bring to it the most startling and arousing illustrations I can think of, trying to produce the most startling and arousing results, willing, if I can save men, to be called by all the world a sensationalist. In this great lawsuit between Sin, Sensation the plaintiff, versus Stagnation, the defendant, I appear as attorney for the plaintiff.

But once more and this will close these anniversary thoughts which I have been presenting for two Sabbaths. I have tried to present to you a religion which would not leave a man in the lurch. What was the trouble with those trains that came out from Chicago, a week ago last Thursday? They started out beautifully and swiftly, but they came to the snow-banks and stopped, and the trains were disbanded. Oh! my friends, we want to get on a through train. We do not want a religion which takes us smoothly through this life, merely for a few miles on earth, and then puts us out at the snow-bank of a cheerless grave. No! You may take that train. I will not take it. I will start on a highway where the marble of the tomb is only the mile-stone on a road always brightening and improving. "Come with us and we will do you good; for the Lord hath promised concerning Israel." I have told the men who feel themselves to be the worst, that Christ died for them, and they have come. And now this morning, I want you all to join me on this path to heaven. It is all tracked up. Examine these tracks in the dust of the road. Ah! those are little feet that have been tracking the road. Have you lost children? They went up this way. I see their tracks on the road. But here there are larger footsteps but footsteps that were very short—very short steps, as though they were the steps of the aged. Is your father gone? Is your mother gone? They went up this way. And behold! in the track of the road I see the mark of a foot that was bare, and a scar in the hollow of the foot. Oh! it was the footstep of a wounded Christ. This is the way—walk ye in it.

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